

# Vol 10 *The War Illustrated* N° 245

SIXPENCE

NOVEMBER 8, 1946

I WAS THERE



VICE-ADMIRAL SIR PHILIP VIAN, K.C.B., K.B.E., D.S.O., seated at his desk, shortly after assuming his new appointment as a Lord Commissioner of the Admiralty and Fifth Sea Lord (Air), on September 23, 1946. In his appointment he will be responsible for the co-ordination of naval air services. Sir Philip is particularly remembered as commander of H.M.S. Cossack when she rescued British prisoners from the Altmark in February 1940 (see story in pages 443-445; and page 171, Vol. 2).

*Edited by Sir John Hammerton*

NO. 246 WILL BE PUBLISHED FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 22

## Our Roving Camera: Poppies for Remembrance Day



**FINISHING TOUCHES TO A CROSS OF POPPIES** being deftly given by an ex-Serviceman in preparation for Remembrance Day, Nov. 10, 1946. Since 1921 at this time of year Flanders Poppies have been sold in aid of Earl Haig's British Legion Appeal Fund. See also New Facts and Figures page 477.



**BLACK BILLY, 32-YEAR-OLD PIT PONY**, worked down a Lanarkshire coal mine for over a quarter-century, until the National Equine (and Smaller Animals) Defence League obtained his release. Black Billy is now in retirement at the League's voluntarily endowed Home of Rest for Horses at Carlisle, and is noted for his passion for tea—in a basin. He was just one of the 23,000 ponies at work in British coal mines on whose behalf a petition, containing 50,000 signatures, was recently presented to Parliament by the League. A 21-year-old pony, named Dobbin, died a short while ago after almost a lifetime in the service of a Co. Durham colliery; badly hurt by a runaway wagon, he had been brought up to ground-level and cared for—but it was too late.



**GERMAN P.O.W. AS BOMB DISPOSERS** are seen assisting a R.E. squad with equipment for removing a 3,000-lb. German bomb at Addiscombe, Surrey. Others, drafted from N. Italy and Belgium, will, after training, replace demobilized Royal Engineers in this work.



**CAMPAIGN STARS** awarded for service in the Second Great War are now being struck by the Royal Mint, in conjunction with Woolwich Arsenal—where rings are seen being attached to the 1939-45 Star. Seven other Stars—the Africa, Italy, Burma, Pacific, France and Germany, Atlantic, and Air Crew Europe—complete the eight campaigns for which decorations have been awarded. It will take about two years to complete the 10,000,000 required.



**H.M. THE KING'S DUTCH HORSES**, magnificent blacks presented by Queen Wilhelmina, are now being trained in London, for ceremonial occasions, by our Household Cavalry, here seen exercising them in Rotten Row. See also illus. page 297.  
Photos, Keystone, The Cumberland News, Pland, Central Press

# 'The Bismarck has been Sunk'

WHEN Mr. Churchill made the brief announcement in Parliament on May 27, 1941: "The Bismarck has been sunk," he rang down the curtain on a sea drama as thrilling as any recorded in history.

In that month the Battle of the Atlantic had entered on its third phase. Though shipping losses had subsided somewhat from the high figures of July-December 1940, a total of 41 vessels of over 250,000 tons gross had been sunk during April 1941 through U-boat attack. During February and March the battleships Scharnhorst and Gneisenau were also raiding commerce in the Atlantic, aided by the heavy cruiser Admiral Hipper. Between them they sank or captured 27 ships, but late in March the two former ships were driven into Brest for recuperation. There they continued to represent a menace to Atlantic convoys should they emerge without interception.

ON May 22 it became known to the Commander-in-Chief of the Home Fleet (Adm. Sir John Tovey) that the big new battleship Bismarck had sailed from Bergen, where she had been located a short time before. This momentous news was obtained by Commander G. A. Rotherham, R.N., of H.M.S. Sparrowhawk, a naval air station in the north of Scotland, who made a personal reconnaissance in very adverse weather conditions to satisfy himself whether or not the ship was still in port.

As a result of the dispositions immediately ordered by Admiral Tovey, the Bismarck, accompanied by the heavy cruiser Prinz Eugen, was sighted on the evening of May 23 in the Denmark Strait, between Iceland and Greenland. The ships which sighted her were the cruisers Norfolk (Captain A. J. L. Phillips) and Suffolk (Captain R. M. Ellis), the former wearing the flag of Rear-Admiral W. F. Wake-Walker. Both enemy ships were proceeding at high speed to the south-westward, and it was difficult to keep them in view through storms of snow and sleet and patches of mist, which at times reduced visibility to no more than a mile. In spite of these obstacles, the enemy continued to be shadowed by the British cruisers throughout the night.

## Located by a Catalina Aircraft

Early in the morning of May 24, H.M.S. Hood (Captain Ralph Kerr) and Prince of Wales (Captain J. C. Leach) made contact with the enemy. The former ship, a battle cruiser dating from the First Great War, was wearing the flag of Vice-Admiral L. E. Holland, Second-in-Command Home Fleet.

Early in the engagement which immediately ensued the Hood received a hit in a magazine from one of the Bismarck's 15-inch salvos and blew up with the loss of practically everyone on board. Some time later the Prince of Wales received a hit which put her fire control system out of action for the time being. Nevertheless, she did not lose touch with the enemy, the Norfolk and Suffolk continuing their skilful shadowing. The Bismarck had not escaped without damage, one of the hits causing a fire to break out on board. On the evening of May 24, having effected temporary repairs, the Prince of Wales was able to renew the action for a short time. At this stage the German ships turned away to the westward, and then swung round on to a southerly course, still closely pursued by the British.

During the night a very gallant torpedo attack was carried out by naval aircraft from H.M.S. Victorious (Captain H. C. Bovell),

By FRANCIS E. McMURTRIE

which had arrived in the vicinity. This attack was a hazardous enterprise, from which those engaged in it had little hope of returning, so bad were the weather conditions. In spite of this all got safely back to their carrier, after hitting the Bismarck with one torpedo. The intrepid leader of this operation, Lieutenant-Commander E. Esmonde, afterwards lost his life in an even more desperate affair—the attempt to torpedo the Scharnhorst and Gneisenau as they passed through the Strait of Dover in February of the following year (see pages 131-133).



SPLINTER-HOLE caused by a shell fired from the Bismarck almost joined up with a porthole of H.M.S. Sheffield, one of the ships engaged in shadowing the German battleship in May 1941. Photo, British Official.

Early on the 25th the weather became thicker, and touch with the enemy was unavoidably lost; she was then in a position about 350 miles S.S.E. of Cape Farewell, the southerly extremity of Greenland. A most anxious period of suspense followed. Not until 10.30 a.m. on May 26, nearly 32 hours later, was the Bismarck located by a Catalina aircraft of Coastal Command, about 550 miles west of Land's End. She was steaming at 22 knots and had parted company with the Prinz Eugen, which was ultimately found to have taken refuge in Brest.

ALTHOUGH driven off and damaged by the Bismarck's well-directed anti-aircraft fire, the Catalina got her report through, enabling the German battleship to be sighted again at 11.15 by naval aircraft from H.M.S. Ark Royal (Captain L. E. H. Maund), belonging to Force "H," based upon Gibraltar. During the afternoon a striking force of torpedo aircraft flew off from this carrier to attack the Bismarck, but did not reach her.

Shortly after 5.30 H.M.S. Sheffield (Captain C. A. A. Larcom), a cruiser which had been detached from Force "H" by Vice-Admiral Sir James Somerville, made contact with the Bismarck and proceeded to shadow her. Twenty minutes later a second striking force flown off from the Ark Royal pressed home its attack and achieved an important success, one torpedo hitting the Bismarck amidships and a second on the starboard quarter. The latter evidently damaged the steering gear, for immediately afterwards the great battleship was seen to make two

complete circles. Thenceforward her speed, already affected by the hit from the torpedo-bombers of the Victorious, was reduced to about 12 knots. A fresh gale from the north-west now forced the Bismarck, owing to the damage to her rudder, to head straight towards her pursuers.

Just before dark a destroyer force under Captain P. L. Vian, including H.M.S. Cossack, Zulu, Sikh and Maori, and the Polish ship Piórún (Commander E. Plawski), made contact with the enemy. They had been steaming all day at high speed in a heavy following sea, but maintained touch with the Bismarck all night under most difficult conditions. During the middle watch they attacked with torpedoes and obtained at least two hits. Though under heavy fire from the Bismarck, they sustained only a few minor casualties.

## Bright Flame Shown in Bismarck

On the morning of May 27 the sun rose on a heavy sea with the north-westerly gale continuing. At times visibility was very good, about 15 miles, until reduced to three or four miles as heavy rain squalls swept across the water. In the British ships the hands had been at action stations all night, taking it in turns to doze off at their posts. In view of the speed with which situations develop in modern warfare it would not have been wise to allow them to go below for breakfast, so cocoa, soup, sandwiches, cake and ship's biscuits were issued.

At eight minutes past 8 the Norfolk reported that she was again in touch with the enemy. The necessary alterations of course were ordered by the Commander-in-Chief, and at 8.42 the Bismarck was sighted 15 miles away, some 500 miles west of Brest.

In the flagship King George V (Captain W. R. Patterson) the following message was given out to officers and men by Sir John Tovey: "The sinking of the Bismarck may have an effect on the war, as a whole, out of all proportion to the loss to the enemy of one battleship. May God be with you and grant you victory."

At 8.47 the battleship Rodney (Captain F. H. G. Dalrymple-Hamilton) opened fire, followed a minute later by the King George V, the range then being about 12 miles. The Bismarck opened an accurate fire at the Rodney at 8.50, narrowly missing her. The first of the King George V's hits was soon observed to enter the base of the Bismarck's forward superstructure, where a bright flame burned for some seconds. Splashes from the 16-inch guns of the Rodney and the 14-inch guns of the King George V rose as high as the enemy's foretop, while those from the 8-inch guns of the Norfolk, and later from those of the Dorsetshire, combined to keep the German battleship almost continuously surrounded by splashes. The enemy's cordite smoke hung heavily, flashes of his guns appearing through it as a dull orange glow.

SHORTLY after 9 the enemy shifted his fire to the King George V, where a whistling noise was heard over the bridge, after which splashes of heavy shell were seen some 400 yards over; but the nearest approach to a hit was a 5.9-inch shell which burst about 50 yards short of the conning tower. In the Rodney nothing worse than a near miss was experienced, a fragment of shell passing through the starboard side of the director controlling the anti-aircraft armament. It smashed the cease-fire bell, passed through a steel helmet hanging near, cut the trainer's telescope in half, hit the



## Great Stories of the War Retold

fire going attached to the director and passed out to the rear, just grazing the trainer's wrist on the way.

By 9.20 the Bismarck, having been repeatedly hit, began to blow off steam, and a strong fire started amidships. Both her forward turrets appeared to be out of action, and the other two were firing intermittently and erratically. She had a heavy list to port, which at 9.25 became most noticeable. As the range decreased, the 5.25-inch batteries of the King George V were ordered to open fire, with devastating effect on the superstructure and upper deck of the enemy battleship. In both the King George V and Rodney the noise of gunfire was no longer noticed. Occasionally, when the turrets fired on extreme bearings, their blast rattled round the superstructure, causing discomfort to the personnel and minor damage. At 9.45 the Bismarck, which was yawing considerably, exposed her starboard side to view for the first time. Observers noticed at least three large fires amidships, and a gaping hole in the bows near the waterline. The few guns left intact were firing spasmodically. The range was now closed to 3,000 yards, and three hits in one salvo were clearly seen. Two entered the deck at the base of the superstructure, and one appeared to tear off the whole of the back from "B" turret, which was quickly enveloped in an enormous sheet of flame. Men were now seen jumping off the quarterdeck into the sea to escape from the intolerable heat. The whole ship had become a blazing wreck, so "Cease fire" was ordered at 10.21. There were no casualties or damage in the British ships, due to the skilful tactics of the commander-in-chief and the heavy fire poured into the enemy throughout the action.

### Turned Turtle and Disappeared

Torpedoes were fired at the Bismarck by the Rodney (one of which hit, probably the only instance in history of one capital ship torpedoing another) in the closing stage of the action, and at 10.36 she sank with colours still flying after further torpedoes had been directed at her by H.M.S. Dorsetshire. She went down in about two minutes, turning turtle and then disappearing, the bows being the last part to submerge. The position as recorded at the time was Lat. 48.10 N., Long. 16.12 W., depth about 2,500 fathoms.

More than 100 officers and men were rescued and made prisoners of war, among them Lieut.-Commander Freiherr von Mullenheim, second gunnery officer, who had been Assistant Naval Attaché in London before the War. Submarines being reported in the vicinity, it was impossible to institute a thorough search for survivors. Two days later the Spanish cruiser Canarias, which was passing through the area, picked up a number of bodies which were later landed for burial.

How many torpedoes were absorbed by the Bismarck is uncertain, but it can hardly have been less than nine; three from naval aircraft, two or more from the destroyers, one from the Rodney and at least three from the Dorsetshire. It will be recalled that some six months later the Prince of Wales, a smaller ship, required a similar number to sink her. Being much better protected by armour than the Hood, the Bismarck's magazines remained intact throughout the action, illustra-

ting the remarkable progress made in naval design between 1916 and 1936.

When addressed by their commanding officer before the action, the ship's company of the Bismarck were assured that the Luftwaffe would be coming to their aid from French airfields. All that was seen of it was a single Focke-Wulf brought down by the King George V's 5.25-inch guns shortly before 4 p.m. on May 26. Still, the Luftwaffe arrived on the following day, a trifle late. As the destroyers Mashona and Tartar were on their way towards their base on the morning of May 28, they were attacked again and again by German aircraft, which continued to come over in waves until nearly midnight. H.M.S. Mashona was sunk with

a substitute was provided in the Bismarck, which it was fondly hoped by the Germans would prove faster than any ship able to stand up to her, and powerful enough to overwhelm all other opponents.

### Lengthy List of Decorations

Honours and awards to those concerned in the hunting down and destruction of the Bismarck included: Admiral Sir John Tovey (now Admiral of the Fleet Lord Tovey), the K.B.E.; Captain (now Vice-Admiral Sir Frederick) Dalrymple-Hamilton of the Rodney and Captain (now Vice-Admiral) Patterson of the King George V, the C.B.E.; Rear-Admiral (the late Admiral Sir Frederic) Wake-Walker; Commodore (now Vice-Admiral Sir Patrick) Brind, Admiral Tovey's Chief of Staff; Captain (now Rear-Admiral) Bovell of the Victorious; and Captain (now Rear-Admiral) Maund of the Ark Royal, each the C.B.E. Six officers received the O.B.E., and a petty officer in the Ark Royal was given the British Empire Medal. Captain (now Vice-Admiral Sir Philip) Vian obtained a second bar to his D.S.O., while those who were awarded the D.S.O. included Commander Rotherham of the Sparrowhawk, Lieut.-Commander (A) Esmonde of the Vic-

torious, Lieut.-Commander T. P. Coode of the Ark Royal, the commanding officers of H.M.S. Sheffield, Prince of Wales, Dorsetshire, Norfolk and Suffolk; and the engineer officers of H.M.S. Rodney, Prince of Wales, Cossack, Suffolk, Norfolk and King George V. A bar to the D.S.C. was conferred on Commander (now Captain) H. T. Armstrong of H.M.S. Maori, and the decoration itself on the commanding officers of the Zulu and Sikh and 27 other officers. To 32 ratings the Distinguished Service Medal was awarded. The officers in charge of the Catalina aircraft which re-located the Bismarck on May 25, and of a Sunderland which shadowed the Bismarck on the night of May 23, each received the Distinguished Flying Cross.

For the guidance of readers who may not have the information at hand, the principal particulars of the various ships mentioned are given in the panel below.

H.M. Ships	Tons	Knots	Guns
King George V (1939)	35,000	28	Ten 14-in.
Prince of Wales (1939)	35,000	25	Ten 14-in.
Rodney (1925)	33,900	23	Nine 16-in.
Hood (1918)	42,100	31	Eight 15-in.
Victorious (1939)	23,000	31	Sixteen 4.5-in.
Ark Royal (1937)	22,000	30.5	Sixteen 4.5-in.
Dorsetshire (1928)	9,925	32	Eight 8-in.
Norfolk (1928)	9,925	32	Eight 8-in.
Suffolk (1926)	10,000	31.5	Eight 8-in.
Sheffield (1936)	9,100	32	Twelve 6-in.
Maori			
Mashona			
Cossack			
Tartar			
Zulu			
Sikh			
(1937)	1,870	36.5	Eight 4.7-in.
Polish Ship			
Piorun (1940)	1,760	36	Six 4.7-in.
German Ships			
Bismarck (1939)	41,700	30	Eight 15-in.
Gneisenau (1936)	32,000	29	Nine 11-in.
Scharnhorst (1936)	32,000	29	Nine 11-in.
Prinz Eugen (1938)	15,000	32	Eight 8-in.
Adm. Scheer (1932)	12,000	26	Six 11-in.
Adm. Graf Spee (1933)	12,000	26	Six 11-in.



NAZI NAVAL PRIDE reached its zenith in the battleship Bismarck which was launched, like her sister ship the Tirpitz, in the spring of 1939. Bismarck sank H.M.S. Hood and damaged H.M.S. Prince of Wales before being brought to bay and destroyed on May 27, 1941, after a six-day chase of 1,750 miles, from Bergen to Iceland and across the N. Atlantic.

Photo, Associated Press

## Royal Navy Destroyers Handed Over to Norway



FULFILLING PART OF THE ANGLO-NORWEGIAN NAVAL AGREEMENT signed in June 1946, two British destroyers, H.M.S. Crozier and H.M.S. Crystal, renamed the Trondheim and Stavanger respectively, were handed over to representatives of the Royal Norwegian Navy, at Chatham, Kent, on October 10. The new nameplate on the Crozier was unveiled by Mme. Erik Colban (1) wife of the Norwegian Ambassador, who (2, centre), inspected the Norwegian crews. The destroyers, with crews (3).

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Photos, Associated Press, P.A.-Reuter, Keystone

## Hamburgers Angered by Nuremberg Acquittals



DISSENTIENT GERMAN VOICES WERE RAISED when the Nuremberg judgement (see pages 431-435) became known; leaders of a Hamburg demonstration (1) carried banners which left their wishes regarding the three Nazis in no doubt. Repatriated from Britain, German P.O.W. recently arrived in Berlin—this one (2) to a wifely greeting. Returned prisoners were taken from Berlin stations to their home towns by motor transport (3). R.E.s fall a chimney (4) in Hamburg—"capital" of the British zone—in clearing a site for the erection of houses for British families. PAGE 454



## Last Milestone in The Desert Rats' Long Trek



IN THE HEART OF THE ENEMY'S CAPITAL, this stone memorial marks the termination of the 2,700 miles route from beginning to end of which the British 7th Armoured Division—the far-famed Desert Rats—fought and defeated their Axis opponents. Erected and unveiled without ceremony the memorial stands at the end of the Ruhr autobahn, and replaces the temporary wooden one set up when the Desert Rats entered Berlin in July 1945 (see page 244, Vol. 9). The memorial originated at Alamein, where in 1942 a crude wooden signpost read "To Berlin."

## Death Brazenly Defied at Arms-Train Explosions

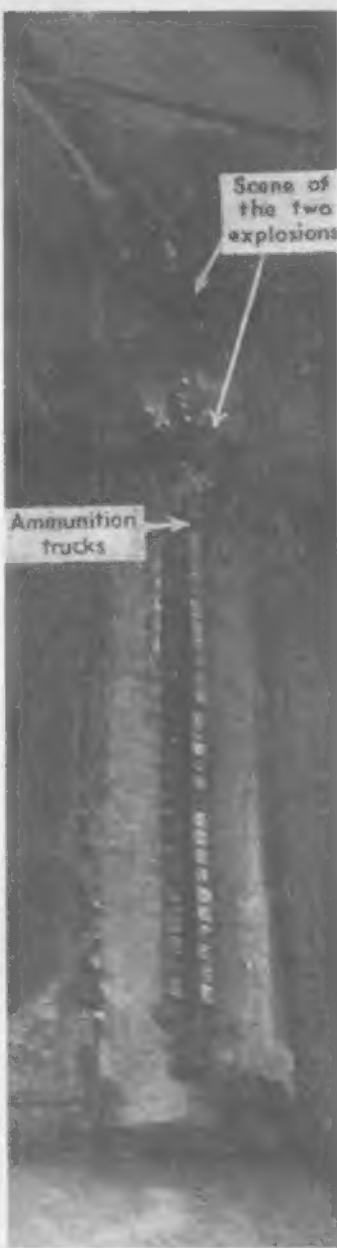


**A**T SAVERNAKE, WILTSHIRE, on January 2, 1946, during the loading of an ammunition train an explosion occurred and fire rapidly spread to another ammunition train alongside. There were further explosions and extensive fires, causing the death of eight soldiers, injuries to others, and the destruction of 27 railway wagons and two lorries containing shells, mines and other explosives, out of a total of 96 loaded wagons in the sidings. Major K. A. Biggs, R.A.O.C., the officer in charge, arrived at the site soon after the first explosion and began to direct operations to prevent a major disaster, danger to the neighbouring town of Marlborough being very real. With complete disregard for their own safety, he and another officer uncoupled and pushed a burning wagon loaded with shells away from the fire and helped to extinguish it. He organized fire-breaks in the face of further cordite fires and explosions. His work in the midst of this inferno, in which more than 200 tons of explosives detonated, was largely instrumental in minimizing the disaster.

**A**FTER a third severe explosion, at about 4.30 p.m., when he was knocked down by blast, Major Biggs went forward and inspected the blazing area closely, refusing to permit anyone to accompany him. Having decided that further loss of life might occur if the fire-fighting was continued he ordered the evacuation of the rail-head, he himself being the last to leave. Major Biggs had the situation fully under control and had done everything reasonably possible. He was awarded the George Cross. Staff-Sergeant S. G. Rogerson, R.A.O.C., took command at the siding when the trucks were blazing furiously and further explosions were momentarily expected. On his own initiative he organized fire parties and commenced unloading ammunition from wagons threatened by the fire. He rescued injured men from under blazing

wagons and helped organize the removal of wounded from the danger area. For his cool appreciation of the situation before the arrival of a superior officer he was awarded the George Cross. Sergeant D. A. Kay, R.A.O.C., also displayed complete disregard for his own safety and was one of the first to assist Staff-Sergeant Rogerson in rescuing injured men. With other soldiers he partially emptied a wagon loaded with mines until he was driven away by the fire. He was awarded the George Medal.

**S**ERGENT J. H. MATTHEWS, Pioneer Corps, arrived at the siding with his tender and fire-fighting crew immediately after the first explosion. He initiated the removal of six threatened wagons to a place of safety and personally uncoupled them, although the end one was blazing, relaxing his efforts only when the water supply had been exhausted and he was ordered to withdraw. He was awarded the George Medal. Corporal A. J. Adams, R.A.O.C., also displayed great bravery and initiative, rescuing several of the injured, and was awarded the British Empire Medal. Driver A. J. Baker, R.A.S.C., drove away four three-ton lorries which were in close proximity to the exploding ammunition and burning wagons. His action cleared a way for the fire-tenders. He was awarded the British Empire Medal. Privates F. Barnett and D. Gallagher, of the R.A.O.C., ran to the engine driver and the shunter of another train in a subsidiary siding and, with them, endeavoured to move some twenty loaded wagons to safety. When that method was found to be impossible these two privates went along the track releasing the brakes, regardless of the exploding ammunition. Both were awarded the British Empire Medal. Sub-Conductor F. W. Godliman and Pte. J. W. Prendergast, R.A.O.C., were respectively awarded the M.B.E. and the B.E.M. for rescuing an injured man in great danger.



**WRECKAGE** at Savernake after the train blew up (1). This aerial view (2) of the railway shows trucks, containing 500 tons of ammunition, which escaped destruction. Award of the George Cross to Major K. A. Biggs (3), who was the officer in charge, and to Staff-Sergeant S. G. Rogerson (4, left) both of the R.A.O.C., was announced (with other awards detailed in this page) on October 11, 1946.

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# More Victoria Cross Awards to Empire Heroes



**Sqn.-Leader  
L. H. TRENT, D.F.C.**  
Leading his squadron of eleven Venturas in an attack on the power station at Amsterdam, Holland, on May 3, 1943, Sqn.-Ldr. Trent (above), of the Royal New Zealand Air Force, succeeded in bombing the target after the other ten aircraft had been shot down. Eventually brought down himself, he was made prisoner.



**Jem. RAM SARUP SINGH**  
This Jemadar of the First Punjab Regiment, twice wounded, led a charge against a hill fortress in Burma on October 25, 1944.



**Lieut.  
R. M. GRAY, D.S.C.**  
Flying off the aircraft carrier H.M.S. Formidable, on August 9, 1945, in Onagawa Wan bay, Japan, this Royal Canadian Navy flier (above), pressed home his attack on an enemy destroyer to within fifty feet although his aircraft was repeatedly hit by A.A. fire. He gave his life but sank his victim.



**C.S.M.  
J. R. OSBORN**  
This Winnipeg Grenadier (right), knowingly sacrificed his life to save his comrades when he threw himself on an enemy grenade during an attack on Mount Butler, Hongkong, on December 19, 1941. Earlier he had covered the withdrawal of his men, exposing himself to intense fire, and holding overwhelming opposition for over eight hours.



**Sqn.-Leader  
A. S. K. SCARF**  
Seeing the remainder of his squadron destroyed by enemy bombers on the ground at Butterfield R.A.F. station, Malaya, this Blenheim pilot (left), on December 9, 1941, carried out the ordered sortie over Singora, Thailand. Completing his mission against overwhelming opposition, mortally wounded, he crash-landed at Alor Star without injuring his crew.



**Major J. W. FOOTE**  
At Dieppe on August 19, 1942, this member of the Canadian Chaplains' Services exposed himself to withering enemy fire on the beaches for about eight hours, assisting the medical officers, ministering to the wounded, and helping in their evacuation. Ignoring opportunities to embark, he saved numerous lives.



**P/O. C. MYNARSKI**  
In a Lancaster bomber over Cambrai, France, on June 12, 1944, this R.C.A.F. pilot officer, although ill, made heroic but vain attempts to extricate the rear gunner cut off by fire. He stood to attention and saluted the rear gunner before descending with blazing parachute into France, where he died of his injuries.



**Guardsman E. C. CHARLTON**  
Engaging a battalion of the 15 Panzer Grenadiers, single handed, with the Browning from his tank at Wistedt, Germany, on April 21, 1945, this Irish Guardsman, with one arm shattered, inflicted severe casualties on the enemy, and retrieved a desperate situation. He died, later, of his wounds in enemy hands.

## HIS MAJESTY'S SHIPS

## H.M.S. Aurora

Motto: "After Darkness, Light"

**L**AUNCHED in 1934, H.M.S. Aurora, a cruiser of 5,270 tons, steamed 201,688 miles and fired 9,163 rounds of 6-in. shell from her main armament during the War. Few ships have equalled her record of service.

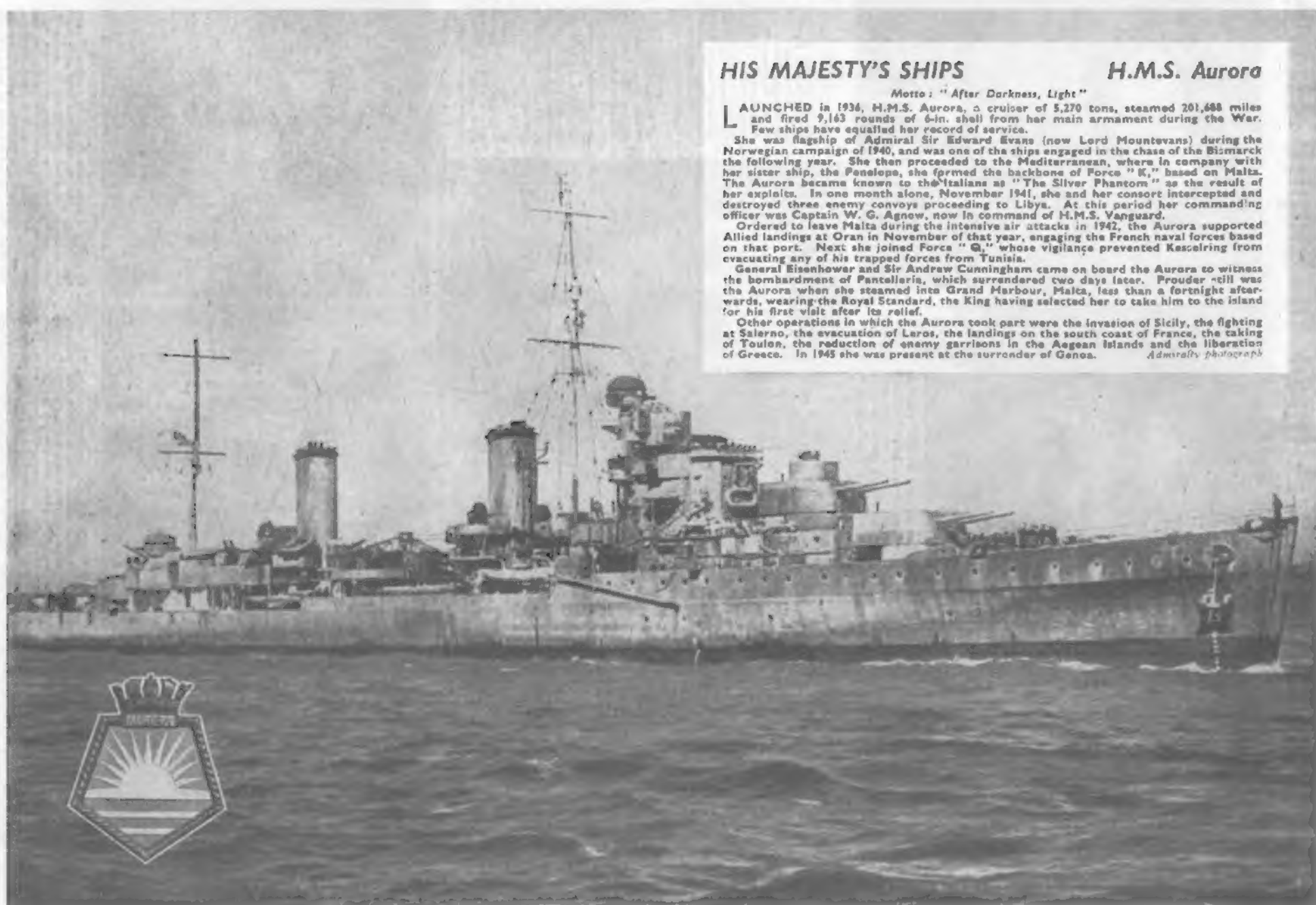
She was flagship of Admiral Sir Edward Evans (now Lord Mountbatten) during the Norwegian campaign of 1940, and was one of the ships engaged in the chase of the Bismarck the following year. She then proceeded to the Mediterranean, where in company with her sister ship, the Penelope, she formed the backbone of Force "K," based on Malta. The Aurora became known to the Italians as "The Silver Phantom" as the result of her exploits. In one month alone, November 1941, she and her consort intercepted and destroyed three enemy convoys proceeding to Libya. At this period her commanding officer was Captain W. G. Agnew, now in command of H.M.S. Vanguard.

Ordered to leave Malta during the intensive air attacks in 1942, the Aurora supported Allied landings at Oran in November of that year, engaging the French naval forces based on that port. Next she joined Force "G," whose vigilance prevented Kesselring from evacuating any of his trapped forces from Tunisia.

General Eisenhower and Sir Andrew Cunningham came on board the Aurora to witness the bombardment of Pantelleria, which surrendered two days later. Proudly still was the Aurora when she steamed into Grand Harbour, Malta, less than a fortnight afterwards, wearing the Royal Standard, the King having selected her to take him to the island for his first visit after its relief.

Other operations in which the Aurora took part were the invasion of Sicily, the fighting at Salerno, the evacuation of Laros, the landings on the south coast of France, the taking of Toulon, the reduction of enemy garrisons in the Aegean Islands and the liberation of Greece. In 1945 she was present at the surrender of Genoa.

Admiralty photograph



# The Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers

At the beginning of the Second Great War, The Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers comprised two regular battalions: the 1st and 2nd. On September 3, 1939, the 1st Battalion was stationed at Wellington, S. India, and the 2nd at Catterick, Yorks. It was only in 1937 that the 2nd had come back into the Army, having been disbanded in 1922. During the period 1922-1937 the 1st Battalion was linked and formed one corps with the Royal Irish Fusiliers (Princess Victoria's), another one-battalion regiment. During the war of 1914-18 there were 13 battalions of Inniskillings. In the Second Great War only one extra "Active Service" Battalion was raised, the 6th, and it was finally disbanded in 1944, having blazed a path of glory for itself through Algeria, Tunis, Sicily and Italy.

Of the three battalions the unlucky one was, undoubtedly, the 1st. It was unlucky to be on the losing side twice, both times in Burma, and was not at the "kill" when all was going well. The 6th Battalion, having started late, was disbanded after it had passed Rome and was well on the way to the winning post. It was thus left to the 2nd Battalion to finish the race, which it did in Austria. One thing is greatly regretted by the Regiment, that no battalion of the Inniskillings took part in the D-Day operations, nor in the sweep across France, Belgium and Holland to the Rhine; many individuals were represented, but no battalion.

As previously stated, the 1st Battalion was at Wellington, S. India when war broke out. There it remained until the end of 1941, when it moved to Meerut (U.P.), with one company at Delhi Fort. At last, in February 1942, when all thought they were going to miss the whole war, they mobilized, leaving Meerut for Calcutta, by train, in March. Things were now looking very black in Burma and this Battalion had the distinction of being one of the very few to be ferried by air from India to Burma. On March 14 the Battalion was complete at Mawla, Central Burma.

## Sad but Proud Record in Burma

Then began a dreadful series of battles, retreats and road blocks, the Japanese perpetually infiltrating, aided by Burmese fifth columnists. Promie was left behind then, on April 17-18 came the battle of Yenangyaung, the oil town. By this time the Battalion had suffered terrible casualties, including two Commanding Officers killed. After Yenangyaung there began the long and weary trek through Upper Burma. The remnants of the Battalion reached Imphal Assam on May 19, 1942. Two months later it arrived at Jalandhar, Punjab, and was immediately filled up by drafts from home. Little time was allowed for this almost new Battalion to get to know itself, and on September 30 it left again for the East.

It joined the 14th Indian Division at Feni, East Bengal, and soon moved south to Chittagong. Christmas Day 1942 was spent in Maungdaw on the Arakan coast. Directly afterwards the Division moved south aiming at Akyab the Inniskillings in the van. The first clash with the Japs occurred at Dabak on the Maya Peninsula. Here the Battalion alone met the Japs, and thus gained the somewhat dubious honour of starting the Dabak Front Line position, which though attacked over and over again by British and Indian troops, held up the British advance

By Major J. R. C. CROSSLÉ

THE defence of the town of Inniskilling, in County Fermanagh, Northern Ireland, against the Irish and French troops of the deposed King James II in 1689 so signally proved the warlike ability of its defenders that King William III took a large portion of the garrison into his pay and ranked them as regiments of the British Army. Enniskillen, as it is called today, is still represented in the British Army by the 5th Royal Inniskilling Dragoon Guards and The Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers. From 1689 to 1751 the latter Regiment bore the name of The Inniskilling Regiment of Foot. From then until 1881 it was known as The 27th Inniskillings, and from 1881 to the present day the name has been The Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers. Its long list of battle honours includes Martinique 1762, St. Lucia 1796, The Peninsular War, Waterloo, Central India, Relief of Ladysmith, and The Great War 1914-18.

until in April 1943, the Japs took the initiative, and recaptured the whole Maya Peninsula and Maungdaw.

From Christmas 1942 until April 1943 the 1st Battalion fought the Japs continuously, on both sides of the Maya Ridge, suffering grievous casualties. The reinforcements being from all parts of the U.K., the variety of accents became rather like the Tower of Babel. Later, Fire, Scotland, North Country, Midland, West Country and Cockney were all represented.

The end came at the beginning of April, when the Japs cut round and isolated the whole 14th Indian Division and all other troops on the Maya Peninsula. The remnants fought their way out. Fresh troops were brought in, and a line was stabilized 20 miles north of Maungdaw. The Battalion was again decimated many of the survivors being riddled with malaria and dysentery. It was then posted to Cawnpore, and early

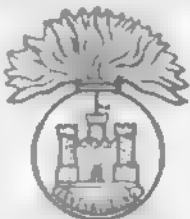
in 1945 to Dehra Dun, where it was on V.J. Day. A sad but proud record of rigorous service in two campaigns, in both of which the Japs were more numerous and better equipped for the jungle. Of the many deeds of valour and self-sacrifice there is not space to tell.

September 3, 1939, found the 2nd Battalion at Catterick Camp, Yorkshire, serving in the 5th Division. It went overseas immediately, fought in France and Belgium, and came back from Dunkirk. The most tragic happening in these operations was the loss, by capture, of Battalion H.Q. complete. The 2nd Battalion remained in the 5th Division until June 1944. After Dunkirk it was stationed in Scotland, Liverpool (during the blitz, with nights of fire-watching in Bootle), then Ireland, and finally Caterham, Surrey. The 5th Division sailed from Glasgow in March 1942 for an unknown destination.

## With the 8th Army in Sicily

In May the 2nd battalion took a minor part in the first assault on Madagascar, and in the capture of Diego Suarez. Exactly a fortnight after the assault landing the Battalion boarded the transport again and set sail for India, coming to rest at Ahmednagar, near Poona. Then started a glorified Cook's Tour: in August to Iraq, then to Kermanshah, Persia, Qum, across the desert to Damascus, Tripoli (Lebanon), El Shatt (Egypt), and in July 1943 the landing in Sicily. It was shortly before the landing that the 5th Division joined the famous 8th Army.

From now on the 2nd Battalion was continuously in the front line. Syracuse, Augusta, the action at Lemon Bridge (in which two D.S.O.s, two M.C.s and an M.M. were earned in a few hours), Catania, Tremont, the road to Messina. Then, early in September the invasion of Italy in which the Battalion was one of the spearheads. They had left Scotland in March 1942 and now



OUTWARD BOUND TO JOIN THE B.E.F., in September 1939, these members of the 2nd Battalion Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, aboard the troopship Royal Sovereign whiled away the time by playing "Housey Housey." Of the three battalions of the Regiment the 2nd was the first to see action, in France in 1940, and the last to remain in the field, being in Austria on V.E. Day.





RETURNING FROM THE BATTLE FOR TWO TREE HILL in Tunisia, in January 1943, these men of the 6th Battalion Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers found the going very heavy. Although occupying this prominent feature the enemy failed in his objective—the taking of Bou Arada. In particularly fierce exchanges the Inniskillings inflicted and sustained severe losses. War Office Photograph

landed on the mainland of Europe in September 1943, having encircled Africa and set foot in nine different countries.

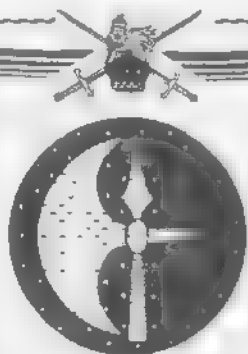
A most gruelling 19 days followed the immediate landing in Italy, in which the 2nd Battalion advanced 240 miles, of which 100 miles were by sea in assault craft, 40 in M.T. (Mechanical Transport) and 100 on foot. The mountainous and rocky nature of the country made this an immense physical effort. Next came Isernia and Castel di Sangro. On January 7, 1944, the Battalion left the 8th Army, having served in it for just over six months, during which time it had been in action against one Italian and nine

different German divisions. It joined the 5th Army, and in mid-January and early February came the battle of the Gangliano, which involved the 2nd in its bloodiest and most tragically glorious battle.

In February came sinister Monte Damiano, and on March 11 the 2nd sailed for Anzio. After the break-out from Anzio the Battalion reached Rome in June 1944, then left the 5th Division, in which it had served so long, returning to Egypt, where it was made up with the personnel of the 6th Battalion, which also had come back to Egypt, to be disbanded. The Battalion now joined the



FROM IRELAND TO IRAN via Madagascar and India was the route taken by the 2nd Battalion Inniskillings before joining the 8th Army in N. Africa for the Sicilian invasion in July 1943. Above, a battalion officer briefs his C.S.M. when in the Iranian Desert. After Sicily the Battalion formed a spearhead for the assault on Italy in September 1943. PAGE 460 War Office Photograph



Colours: Yellow Battle-axe on Black

#### 78TH (BRITISH) DIVISION

ALTHOUGH not formed until mid-summer 1942, the 78th had as its nucleus troops who had served in France with the B.E.F. in 1940. Within six months of its formation the Division landed in N. Africa with the British First Army, on November 8, 1942, and bore the brunt of the fighting early in the campaign.

It cut off Algiers shortly after landing, and captured Bougie, November 11. Medjez el Bab was taken on November 27. Bitter fighting was experienced near Tebourba, and again, in January 1943, in the Oued Kebir and Ousselma valleys, and at Bou Arada. Sodejane was captured on March 30, and Cap Serrat reoccupied four days later. All but one slope of Longstop Hill fell on April 23 to the Division, which it is claimed was the first Allied infantry formation to enter Tunis, in the first week in May.

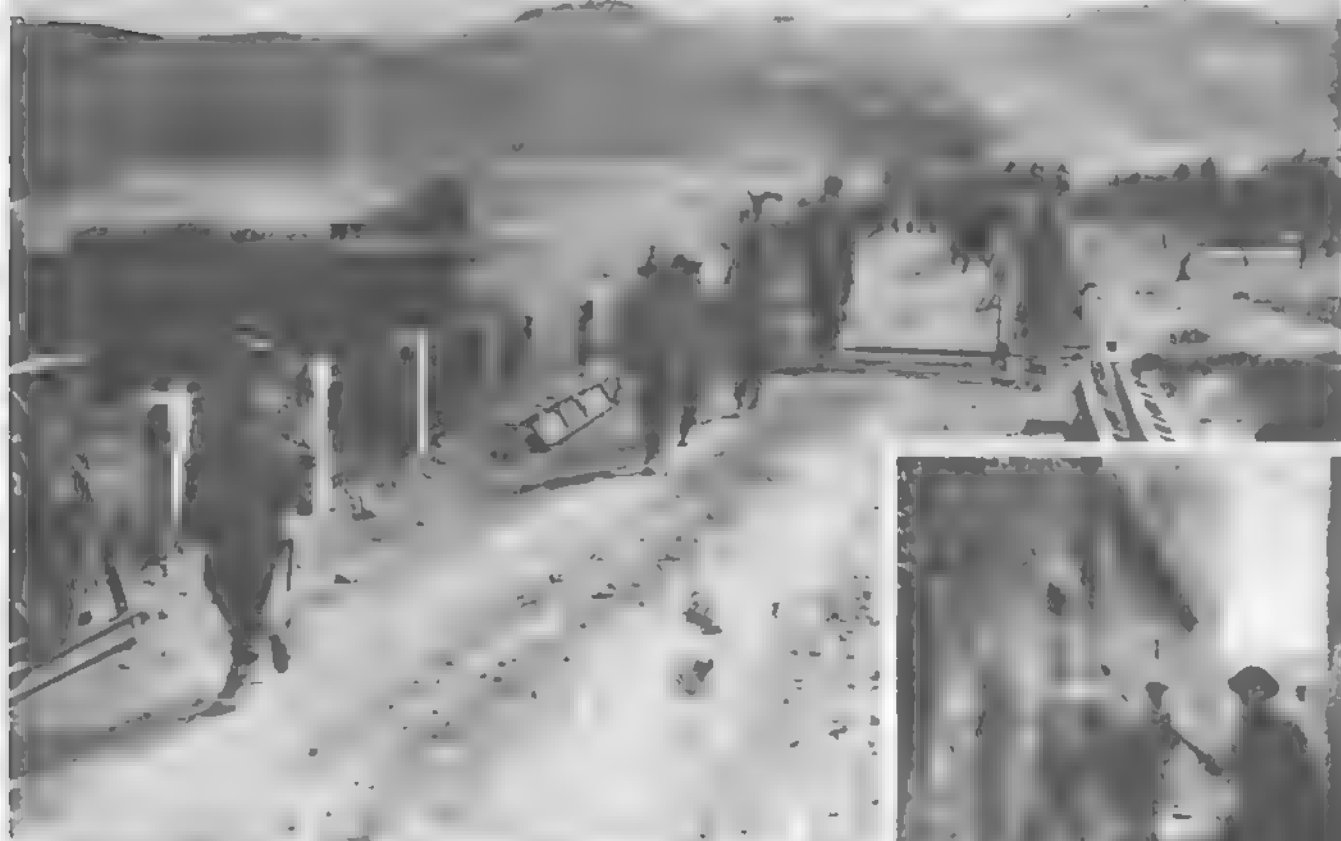
LATE in July, and now with the 8th Army, a landing was made in Sicily, where the Division captured Centuripe, on August 5, and Agrano a few hours later. The Simeto and Salso rivers were forced. Elements of the Division landed at Taranto for the Italian invasion in September, taking Foggia on September 27. Other units landed at Termoli early in October and quickly crossed the Biferno and took Moncillone. Costly struggles ensued in the subsequent stages of the campaign, notably along the Trigno, in October, and the Sangro, which by November 14 had been crossed and the powerfully defended line penetrated. During March and April 1944, the 78th distinguished itself in the battle for Cassino. It was prominent in the capture of Orvieto on June 14.

By June 25 the Pescara had been crossed and Castiglione reached. By September the Gothic Line had been penetrated. In the Allies' final Italian offensive in April 1945, in the battle of the Argenta Gap, the river Po was reached and crossed during the last week of the month. After the surrender of Germany the 78th became an Occupational Force in Austria, and was disbanded in September 1946.

Irish Brigade, taking the place which had previously been held by the 6th Battalion. By way of Taranto, Mt. Spadara, Senio, the Argenta Gap and the Po, and still fighting all the way, it passed the winning post in May 1945, at Villach in Austria. A hard road and a long, long trek.

The 6th Battalion was formed at Hollywood, Co. Down, on October 9, 1940, and was disbanded in Egypt in July 1944. During its short life it saw a tremendous amount of hard fighting, and suffered very heavy casualties during its triumphant sweep through North Africa, Sicily and Italy. After its formation it was stationed in various places in Ireland, including Belfast during the blitz, and in January 1942 it crossed to England. After a short time at Frinton-on-Sea, Essex, it moved to Shakers Wood in Norfolk, where it joined the Irish Brigade,

## 2nd and 6th Inniskillings Campaign in Sicily



**TAKING CENTURIPÉ.** Sicily, was the outstanding achievement of the 6th Battalion Inniskillings in the Sicilian campaign in August 1943. Operating with the British 78th Division, troops of the Battalion are seen crossing a temporary bridge on the road leading to the town (1). The storming of Centuripe—"Cherry Ripe" to the troops—was a feat which "will live in the annals of British arms" declared F.M. Viscount Montgomery of Alamein, then Commander of the British 8th Army. Desperately defended, the town fell on August 2, and then not before the Battalion had cleared the enemy houses by house (2).

**2nd BATTALION** of the Regiment, aboard the troopship Dunera (3), en route to take part in the Sicilian invasion is briefed by one of its officers in the role which the Battalion played in these operations. This involved many front line actions, including the battles for Catania, Syracuse and Augusta, to be followed by landings in Italy in September 1943. The Battalion had seen service in nine countries.

For the complete story  
PAGE 461



ST. PATRICK'S DAY IN THE ANZIO BEACH-HEAD, Italy, may have lacked traditional custom with which the Irish National holiday is usually celebrated, but the 2nd Battalion Inniskillings did not allow March 17, 1944, to go unnoticed. Some of them are here enjoying the extra rum ration sent to them by the C.O. for the occasion. War Office photograph

with which it served until its disbandment. The Irish Brigade soon moved to Scotland, whence it sailed in November 1942 for North Africa as part of the 1st Army. Algiers was reached on November 22, after an uneventful trip. The Battalion moved immediately up to the Goubellat area, where it had its first clashes with the Germans

#### "A Triumph for the Inniskillings"

After a slight pause, in which both sides were sparring for an opening, the 6th Battalion were engaged in the most ferocious fighting in Goubellat Plain and Grandstand, in January and February 1943. During these actions very heavy casualties were inflicted and received. At this time the enemy were mainly from the Hermann Goering Jaeger Regiment, a tough crowd who asked for and gave no quarter. At the end of March the Brigade left the 6th Armoured Division in which it had served since leaving Scotland, and came under the command of an Infantry Division. Quickly there followed the storming of Djebel Mahdi and Tangoucha, in which actions the Irish Brigade particularly distinguished itself.

A newspaper account at that time said, "The taking of Tangoucha was a triumph for the Inniskillings. The capture took them three days. They were driven back twice, but refused to go from the hill. The Germans bowled grenades down at them, covered them with deadly machine-gun, shell and mortar fire, but the Inniskillings just wore down the enemy's resistance until he finally surrendered." About the same time Sir Stafford Cripps, speaking in Belfast, said, "The Irish Brigade did the hardest fighting and had the longest service in the whole of the First Army." Then came

the triumphant entry into Tunis and the end of the enemy in North Africa.

Now the story reaches out across the sea, to the landing in Sicily in July 1943. The outstanding achievement of the 6th Battalion in Sicily was the storming of Centuripe, on August 2—that town perched like an eagle's nest on the top of a precipice. For this action the Battalion received a D.S.O., three M.C.s, and a M.M. The account of the action, issued by the Ministry of Information, declared, "The taking of Centuripe, which forced the Germans to reorganize their entire line, was primarily a triumph for The Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers." The Brigadier wrote, "Centuripe was the 'Skin's' battle." And



GUARDING THE AUSTRO-YUGOSLAV FRONTIER in 1944, this Fusilier of the 2nd Battalion appears to have a lonely vigil. This frontier post was held by one officer and a small platoon only. PAGE 462 War Office photograph

the Army Commander, General Sir Bernard Montgomery, said, "The taking of Centuripe is a great feat, which will live in the annals of British arms."

The Irish Brigade reached Randazzo on Friday, August 13, the last of the fighting in Sicily. There followed five weeks' rest, a sea voyage to Taranto in Italy, then Barletta and another sea voyage to Termoli, where the Brigade had a very sharp clash with the Germans. It was then early October 1943. Now came a series of stiff engagements with the enemy, who was fighting as hard as he knew how to hold up the advance for as long as possible before withdrawing to a fresh prepared position. Such were the crossing of the River Trigno, the battles for San Salvo and Vasto, the crossing of the Sangro and the capture of San Vito, which the Germans had decided to hold as their "Winter Line."

#### Motoring Along the Road to Rome

By December 4 the 6th Battalion was on the line of the Moro River, having broken through the "Winter Line." The Irish Brigade was now relieved, the casualties since landing in Italy having been 36 officers and 823 O.R.s. In this last stage it had been in continuous action for seven days and nights without respite.

At Christmas 1943 the 6th Battalion moved up to Capracotta, a famous winter sports centre in peacetime. Snow fell heavily, and rations were short. Owing to snowdrifts on the roads a flight of Douglas Transports had to come to the rescue, and rations fell from the sky attached to gaily coloured parachutes. In March and April 1944 a hair-raising month was spent among the rocks, high up in the mountains just north of Cassino. May found the Battalion crashing its way through the Gustav Line, and June 8 saw it motoring along Highway 6—the Road to Rome. On June 12 a representative party was received by the Pope, in the Vatican, and the Irish Pipes played in front of St. Peter's.

Action came again near Lake Trasimeno, after the chase of a somewhat demoralized enemy. This was the last battle in which the 6th Battalion took part. The official reason given for the disbandment of the 6th, at the height of its fame, was the lack of Irish reinforcements. The Battalion travelled south to Taranto, and so to Egypt, to be greeted on the quay at Alexandria by the pipes of the 2nd Battalion.

A short time was spent in amalgamating the 6th Battalion with the 2nd—and the 6th Battalion The Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers had ceased to exist. The Regiment as a whole consoles itself with the thought that its distinguished career was brought to a close while it was still at the very pinnacle of its success.

THE Inniskillings who stormed the heights of St. Lucia in 1796, and who withstood the onslaughts of Napoleon's Armies at Waterloo in 1815, had every reason to welcome into Valhalla the young generation of Inniskillings who fought and died so bravely in Africa, Sicily, Italy and Burma. The great traditions of the Regiment had indeed been faithfully maintained.



## *Britain's Swift Change-Over to Peace Production*



*Photo, Topical Press*

This scene at the Sheffield works of the English Steel Corporation, showing rear-axle casings for heavy road vehicles—so urgently needed in our trade push—being removed from the drop-forging department, typifies the rapid reconversion of our factories to post-war needs. During Battle of Britain days the drop-hammer here was the only one which could forge crankshafts for Spitfires; it was worked 16 hours a day and it produced ten crankshafts an hour.



### ***Our Machines of War Now Hum to the Tune of—***

Opening the "Britain Can Make It" Exhibition in London on Sept. 24, 1946—the first exhibition of Industrial Design to be organized after the gravest crisis in our history (see illus. pages 422-423)—H.M. the King reminded the world that "no country was more completely given over to war than ours." In the nation-wide change-over are included workers in a factory where containers for Service rations were made: now they stamp out (1) lids for tobacco and other tins.

*Photos, From Left:*

### ***—a Mighty Drive to Bring Back Prosperity***

Machinery which pressed out parts for bomb-racks delivers components of electric cleaners (2). At a textile machinery foundry a hydraulic mangle (3) is for export to India—for finishing linen. A toy factory (4) becomes again the source of many things to delight the youthful heart. The plastics industry was of great account in war: now telephone instruments are moulded (5). Wellington bombers engaged the attention of workers who now assemble washing-machine cabinets (6).



### ***Little Things That Mean So Much to All of Us***

*Photos: Topical Press*

Grim austerity further fades with the production of tennis balls (1) at this factory which turned out Halifax bombers; there, too, bicycle valves (3) are vulcanized. Where brass fuse-caps came into being collar studs (2) are now processed. Emphasis is placed on new design and methods not only for the Home market but, in the words of H.M. the King, "The Overseas markets, upon which our prosperity, our solvency, and our standard of life must depend in years to come."



## Our Empire's Proud Share in Victory

# HONGKONG, BORNEO, FIJI AND TONGA

**W**ITHIN less than a hundred years Hongkong, the British Colony off the south-east China coast, was built up from the headquarters of a few pirates and fishermen to a great centre of international trade. In the general strategic set-up of the Pacific the function of Hongkong was mainly that of a forward outpost; but with the emergence of Japan as a strong naval and air power, and the development by the Japanese of Formosa, Hongkong was rendered unsuitable as an independent strategic point for defence. As events developed and the Japanese gained more and more offensive bases on the mainland, the fatal weakness of Hongkong's position became more apparent.

The loyalty of the Colony prior to the Japanese invasion was never in question. In addition to a gift of £200,000 towards the war effort from the Hongkong Government, private individuals of all classes subscribed £168,890 for the purchase of aircraft and £30,841 for war charities. The pre-war defence contribution of about £400,000 per annum towards the cost of the Imperial garrison in Hongkong, was also continued. The local factories contributed several million dollars' worth of war materials (chiefly rubber footwear, electric torches and textiles) which went to the Middle East. There was a Volunteer Defence Force, and over 15,000 of the inhabitants, with a substantial proportion of Chinese, manned the Civil Defence Services.

On December 7, 1941, Japan opened hostilities against the United States, and on the following day Japanese forces, estimated at one division, with a second division immediately in reserve, crossed the frontier of the Leased Territories on the mainland forming the hinterland of Hongkong. In spite of brave resistance, the mainland became untenable; by midday on the 13th it was decided to commence a withdrawal, and by the 12-13th all troops were back on the Island of Hongkong. Operating from depth, the Japanese had the overwhelming advantage against the defenders of this small island—defenders who were denied adequate air or naval support. On December 25 the end came when the Military and Naval Commanders informed the Governor that no further resistance could be made. On the same day the Secretary of State for the Colonies sent this message to the Governor: "The defence of Hongkong will live in the story of the Empire, to which it adds yet another chapter of courage and endurance."

**B**ORNEO, in the East Indian archipelago, is the third largest island in the world. At the time of the Japanese invasion, in December 1941, about two-thirds belonged to the Netherlands; the remaining one third, consisting of British North Borneo, Sarawak and Brunei, was under British protection. When invasion came, the two local forces, the Sarawak Volunteer Force and the Sarawak Rangers, did not stand a chance. Prior to the invasion, the contribution to the war effort lay in the valuable supplies of oil, rubber and timber, and the loyalty of the peoples was displayed in the generosity of their gifts to various war funds. In North Borneo and Sarawak private individuals donated £313,900, and in addition over £15,000 was contributed for the purchase of aircraft. Gifts from Brunei, equally generous, were included in those of British Malaya.

By HARLEY V. USILL

**L**IKE Malaya and Singapore, the colonies of Hongkong and Borneo suffered the fate of being overrun by the Japanese invasion of 1941. Other British possessions in the Far East were more fortunate among them the Fiji and Tonga islands, which contributed in no small measure to the final Allied victory in the Pacific.



Japanese propagandists attempted to present the war in the Pacific as a struggle of the coloured races trying to free themselves from an unbearable yoke of white oppression or, in the case of the British islands, from the intolerable grasp of British Imperialism. In the Pacific islands we find the lie direct given to the Japanese. The circumstances in which the war was fought in this area were such as to enable aggressive warfare to be waged against the Japanese by Colonial peoples. They played a great part, for instance, in the Guadalcanal campaign, which was to prove

decision as to whether or not Fijians were fit to play an active part in the war. They became "the finest jungle fighters in the world," and on Guadalcanal, although their own total of Japanese killed ran into three figures, did not suffer a single fatal casualty. They took many prisoners and destroyed quantities of enemy stores and equipment.

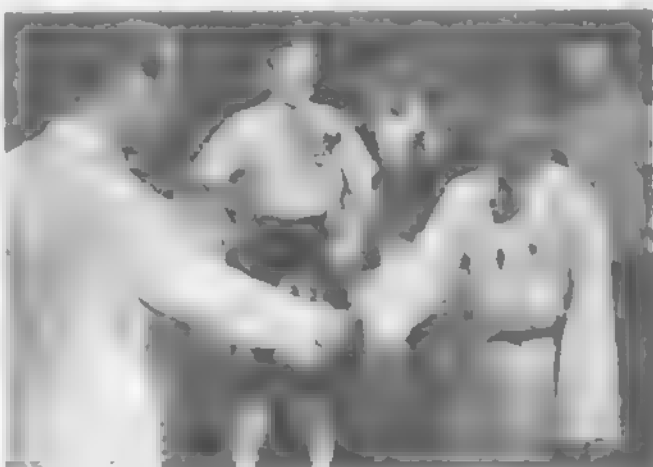
Later, the Commandos took part in the invasion of New Guinea, and their timely arrival on the Zenana beach-head prevented what might well have proved a disaster for the Americans, who were in danger of being outflanked and cut-off by the Japanese. The authorities were now convinced that the Fijians were first-class fighters, and in 1943 the Fiji Military Forces were reorganized as a Brigade. On April 13 the First Battalion of the Fiji Infantry Regiment left for Guadalcanal, and was later sent to Kolombangara to mop up the Japanese after their withdrawal. From here the Battalion went to the Empress Augusta Bay beach-head at Bougainville, where it made a deep penetration on reconnaissance and patrol into the enemy-held areas of the island.

The Battalion then set out on the Numa trail to establish an outpost at the small village of Ibu, from which position patrols could range over a wide area. After repelling repeated Japanese attacks it was decided to evacuate Ibu; and, with one Fijian to 110 Japanese killed, the Fijians carried out a rearguard action which an Allied Commander described as "an action which I think will go into the records as a minor tactical classic."

On March 12, 1944, the Third Battalion, which had a smaller proportion of Europeans than any unit which had gone overseas before, joined the First Battalion in the Solomons. They were accompanied by the Fiji Dock Company, which had been recruited from the Fiji Labour Corps. This Battalion was detailed to carry out a series of seaborne raids behind the Japanese lines, and the Commander of the American Division wrote that they carried out "in a superior manner" one of the first important tasks entrusted to them. The culminating achievement of the Fijian forces came in November 1944 with the first award of the V.C. to a coloured Colonial soldier during the war. (See portrait of Cpl. Sukanaivalu in page 599, Vol. 8.) By January 1945 both Battalions of the Fiji Infantry Regiment were back in Fiji, having played a truly magnificent part.

The centenary of the Kingdom of Tonga, a group of about 150 islands, was celebrated on December 4, 1945. In September 1939, though there was no obligation for her to do so, the Queen Salote undertook to devote the whole resources of her Kingdom to the Allied cause. By early 1944 Tongans, who number about 32,000 had subscribed nearly £82,000 for defence or for war charities.

The Tongan Voluntary Defence Force was originally organized as a defensive measure, but their then second-in-command, Lieut. Henry Talaai, a full-blooded Tongan, was confident of their fighting qualities. "We were famous warriors in the old days," he said, "and were feared all over the Pacific Ocean; we are a bit out of practice but we think we can pick it up again." Actually the Force was not called upon to play a part in the war as a separate unit, but a detachment was sent to Fiji and served with great credit alongside Fijian troops in the Solomons.



VISITING BRITISH NORTH BORNEO, which was proclaimed a Crown Colony on July 15, 1946, the Governor-General of Malaya, Mr. Malcolm MacDonald, shook hands with an aged Dyak chief who claims to have 30 Japanese heads to his credit. Photo, British Official

a turning point of the Pacific war and the graveyard of Japanese dreams of Empire.

The British Colony of Fiji, situated in the Southern Pacific, midway between Tonga and New Caledonia, consists of about 250 islands of varying sizes covering an area of over 7,000 square miles. In 1942 the population was approximately 234,000, of whom 109,200 were Fijians, 105,500 East Indians, 4,900 Europeans and the rest Chinese. The presence of a large number of troops necessitated an intensive food production drive to meet requirements on the home front. In addition, during the year 1943, as an example, more than 100,000 lb. of fruit and vegetables were delivered to the United States, New Zealand and Fijian military forces. Financially, Fiji's all-round total contribution to the war in gifts up to the autumn of 1944 amounted to nearly £167,000.

Early in the war compulsory military training in the Fiji Local Defence Force for Europeans and part-Europeans was introduced, and in January 1942 all territorial defence forces were called up for full-time service. Europeans, Europeans, Fijians, Indians, Rotumans and Solomon Islanders served together in the Fiji Home Guard. In December 1942 a "sample force" of Fijian Commandos went into action with the Americans at Guadalcanal, in the Solomons. In a very real sense they were "on approval," since on their behaviour depended the

# Europe's Wartime Capitals in 1946

## SOFIA

By JOHN D. MACK, M.P.

ONLY sixty years ago Sofia, the capital of Bulgaria, was a village of less than 5,000 inhabitants. When the Russians liberated Bulgaria in 1878 and Sofia was established as a capital, it contained only three houses which had more than three rooms. One of these houses was converted into a "Palace." The second became Government House, with the Cabinet sitting in one room, the general staff in the second and all the other Ministries in the remaining room. The third "big house" was reserved for the foreign diplomats.

Sofia is now a city of three-quarters of a million people, and with a pre-war reputation of being the tidiest and cleanest capital in the Balkans. There are no fine, historic buildings, but the centre of the town, though badly knocked about by air raids during the War, is well planned and has large squares and beautiful boulevards. The largest square is in front of the Sobranie, the Bulgarian Parliament, where 150,000 people assembled recently to hear me speak about Britain. The great boulevard across that square, called Tsar Liberator, in honour of the Russian Tsar Alexander II who liberated the country, leads to a beautiful and well-kept park, known in the past as the Boris, but now, significantly, renamed National Park. (Boris was the last reigning king of Bulgaria, whose German dynasty has now been voted out of favour with the Bulgarians.)

Next to the Sobranie is the most interesting building in Sofia—the great cathedral Alexander Nevski, built by the Bulgarians before the 1914-18 war to mark their feeling of friendship towards Russia. In this magnificent building the most important religious ceremonies are held. The church is still very much honoured in Bulgaria and the priests wear colourful garments just as the Eastern Orthodox and Russian priests do. The religious service is sometimes held in old Slavonic, the common language of all Slavs 1,000 years ago.

### Black Market Almost Non-Existent

On the other side of the city I visited some of the worst slums I have ever seen, sad relics of the past when the majority of Sofia's workers lived in wooden huts, usually built around the factories they worked in. Strangely enough, in the centre of this slum area the governments of the past had built a vast "central political prison," which had housed, in the last 20 years, most of Bulgaria's present Ministers and political leaders. The Prime Minister, Kimon Georgiev, had been in and out of it 22 times. His deputy-Premier, General Terpeshev, had been there for 18 years of his life, and survived it! His War Minister, General Velchev, had been there for "only" six years. No wonder that the present Bulgarian leaders are reported to have nerves of iron.

Sofia is one of the very few cities in Europe where the black market is almost non-existent. There are of course, traces of it, because of the lack of commodities, especially clothes and shoes. But the Bulgarians act mercilessly towards black marketeers, and an offence of hoarding can result in a death sentence. Whilst I was there two prominent Sofia business men were sentenced to penal servitude for life for hoarding large quantities of flour. The bread ration is about 1-lb per head daily. The butter ration is twice as large as that in Britain. Milk is not rationed, and there are plenty of eggs—as many as 10 to 15 a week per person.

Almost all civil servants and workers eat in co-operative restaurants, run by their own Trade Union. The big restaurants in the centre of the city, where you can have food as good as can be obtained in any of the best

hotels in London's West End, are frequented only by the diplomats, foreign correspondents, members of the Allied Missions and members of the few rich Bulgarian families. The common people love going out to the so-called coffee houses, where for the equivalent of 6d. you can have an ice-cream, or for the equivalent of 1d. a Turkish coffee. These houses are the meeting-places of politicians, journalists, actors, officers and so on. Many people will sit for hours quarrelling and gesticulating over a cup of coffee. You are usually offered this beverage even when you go to visit a civil servant in his office. One newspaperman told me that he drinks on the average about 40 coffees a day. In no capital in the world does one receive more hospitality and warmth of welcome. All Sofia looks forward earnestly to the closest contact and friendship with Great Britain.

### Cultural Life is Flourishing

Bulgaria is the only country in Eastern Europe which has not fallen into the wild abyss of complete inflation. Prices are, on the average, four or five times higher than they were before the War. Salaries have increased only twice, and this puts all white-collar employees and workers into a disadvantageous position. The treasury has been obliged to vote huge credits for supplementary remuneration for the civil servants, but no substantial increases of the basic salaries will be made, I was told, until there are more goods on the market and the economic position is stabilized.

Reconstruction in the capital is very slow because of the general lack of building materials. Most of the new houses and shops now being erected are small wooden huts. Only a very few large Government buildings have been started. Road and railway construction and the building-up of bridges, however, appears to have made good progress. Though machinery and tools are very scarce, there is no unemployment, as the small Bulgarian industry is now able to work at full capacity; indeed, there is lack of teachers, doctors, technicians and competent and well-trained civil servants.

One of the most extraordinary things concerning life in Sofia is the theatre. It is a National theatre, and all Bulgarian actors and directors are civil servants in so far as remuneration is concerned. There are

National theatres in several of the towns, whilst touring companies visit the remotest parts of the country. In Sofia alone there are three National theatres performing what the Bulgarians call "drama," two theatres for opera and ballet and three for comedy and musical shows. In addition, there are four symphonic orchestras and over ten repertory theatres run by the State Dramatic Schools.

The stage can well compare with the very best in Europe. It is under the strong influence of the world-famous Moscow Arts Theatre, and Russian producers and actors are very popular. All theatres and concert-halls are absolutely packed, the most expensive ticket costing only a shilling or two. The whole theatre world there is under the general guidance of the Ministry of Information and Arts. I had a long talk with the Minister himself, Mr. Kazassov, a jovial and highly cultured little fellow with a white beard, by profession a journalist and playwright. He is helped by a "dramatic council" elected by the Association of Artists.

Incidentally, this Trade Union is one of the most influential in the country, and the Minister of Arts appoints the directors of the Sofia and provincial theatres only on the recommendation of the Union. When I was there they played Shakespeare, Shaw, Eugene O'Neill, Chekhov, Gorki and several Bulgarian writers. "The darlings of our State," Minister Kazassov told me, "are the writers, the actors and the producers. Some of them are real national figures, much more popular and influential than many politicians."

The beauty of Sofia is in its surroundings. A fifteen to twenty minutes' drive to the south-west will bring you to the foothills of the Vitosha mountain, covered with snow almost the whole year round as its height is well over 6,000 feet. During the winter almost everyone goes skiing there, and during the summer every Sunday nearly half of Sofia's population climbs the Vitosha by way of week-end fun. For not so enterprising tourists there is a motor road, which takes one as high as 5,000 feet.

### City of Extraordinary Contrasts

During the War and the German occupation Vitosha was full of partisans, and you can now see many commemorative plaques which record that at such and such a date a heavy battle was fought in this beautiful and now quiet place, and that so many people lost their lives in it. Sofia suffered chiefly from air raids, and some fighting when the forces of the present Government coalition, known as the Fatherland Front, attacked it, fought their way into the centre, and promptly arrested all Ministers and leaders of the Fascist regime. That was on the night before September 9, 1944, and the date is now proclaimed a National holiday throughout the country—Liberation Day as they call it.

It is usually celebrated with a big parade, which continues for hours, and in which not only the army, the civil servants, the workers and the students take part but also practically the whole population of the city. As it continues for more than seven hours and everyone is thoroughly exhausted, the next day is usually a bank holiday in order that all who took part—including the Ministers and Generals who stood for hours on the rostrum—can enjoy a much-needed rest.

Thus Sofia today is a city of extraordinary things—of contrasts, of slums and of symphonic orchestras, of dingy coffee houses and beautiful mountains; the capital of a small, lovable, warm-hearted and hard-working Slav people, conscious that now, for the first time in its history, it has taken its destiny, for better or for worse, into its own hands.



WATCHING THE PARADE in Sofia which marked the Republic's founding were the Premier, Col. Kimon Georgiev (right), and M. Georgi Dimitrov, leader of the Fatherland Front. PAGE 46B Photo I V P

## Sofia's Citizens Welcome Their New Republic



**CELEBRATIONS IN THE CAPITAL** followed the proclamation of a Bulgarian People's Republic on September 15, 1946. By an overwhelming majority the plebiscite held on September 8 rejected the monarchy which had twice led the country into disastrous wars. Popular feeling is expressed in the cartoon (top) of Kings Ferdinand and Boris and the latter's son, the child Simeon (see illus. page 278, Vol. 7), whose Regents had finally discredited the monarchy. Above, young Bulgarians in national costumes parade through Sofia's rejoicing streets. **PAGE 469** *Photos, International News Photos*

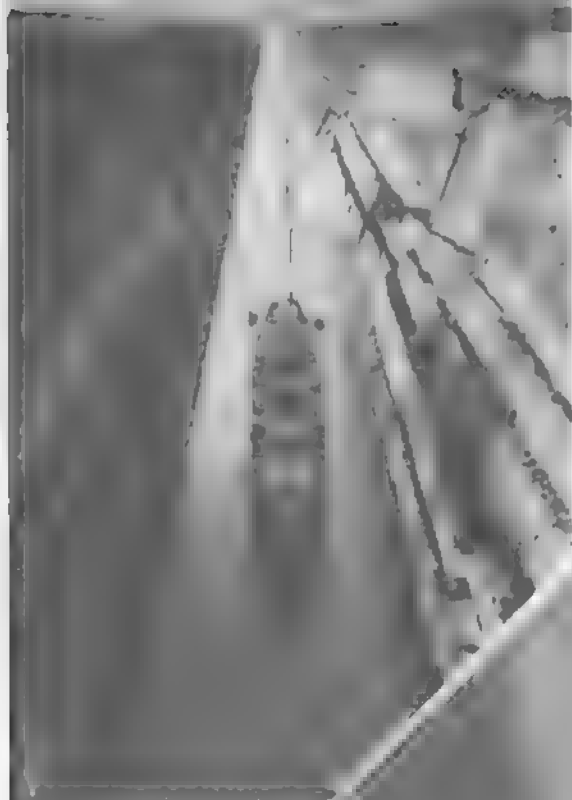


## Housing the Homeless: Aluminium and Concrete



**TURNING THEIR BACKS ON TRADITIONAL METHODS**, builders at Cheltenham, Glou., ran up an estate of 173 aluminium houses (1) in 11 months. At Greenwich, London, the "Orlit" type (2) consists largely of precast concrete. Near Hillingdon, Mdx., in the "Shutter" method (3) shutters are removed after concrete poured between them has set. Kitchen sections (4)

## Tremendous Task of Clearing the Corinth Canal



**BLOCKED BY THE GERMANS** when they were evacuating the Peloponnese in the autumn of 1944, the four-mile long Corinth Canal (1), as it appeared in pre-war days, connecting the Gulfs of Corinth and Aegina, Greece, is still closed to shipping. Sunken vessels have now to be removed; salvage operations are in progress on one which seals an entrance (2) and another is being inspected, for underwater damage, by a diver (3). A bridge which spanned the canal lies as a tangled barrier (4), beyond it are thousands of tons of dynamited rock. The waters are also mined.

The great task of clearance and repair of the canal is estimated to occupy several years, during which period shipping plying between the Ionian coast and Athens will have to take a route entailing an additional 200 miles.

See also page 446, Vol. 2.

Photos by Paul G. P. U.

PAGE 471





**Sgt. Obv. J. BARTON**  
Coastal Cmd. R.A.F.V.R.  
Action: Cherbourg 31.3.43  
Age 21 (Orreby)

No great idea from the thousands of readers in our invitation to submit portraits for our Roll of Honour thus no doubt that we have every hope of being able to publish all those so far received.



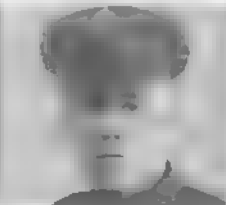
**Pte. A. BARNES**  
King's Reg. (Liverpool)  
D. wds. Kalewa, June '43  
Age 29 (Preston)

## The Roll of Honour

1939-1946



**L. Sgt. A. E. BAYLISS**  
Northamptonshire Yeo.  
Action: Caen 19.7.44  
Age 25 (Northampton)



**Gdsmn. R. BLACKBURN**  
1st Bn. Irish Guards.  
Action: N. Africa 28.4.43  
Age 32 (Garstang)



**L. Cpl. A. K. BROAD**  
Oxford & Bucks L.I.  
Monastery Hill 4.12.43.  
Age 28 (Buckingham)



**Cpl. J. H. BURDON**  
Royal Army Service Corps.  
West Africa 23.7.43.  
Age 27 (Widnes)



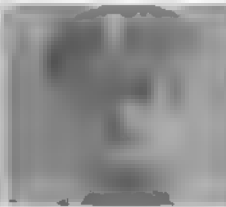
**Sgt. G. CHARLESWORTH**  
Bomber Command, R.A.F.  
Action: Düsseldorf 16.9.42  
Age 21 (Barnesley)



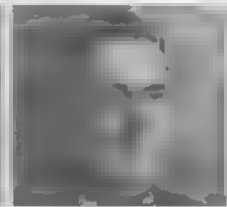
**Pte. J. CROWTHER**  
East Lancashire Regiment.  
Action: N.W. Europe 27.6.44.  
Age 9 (Leeds)



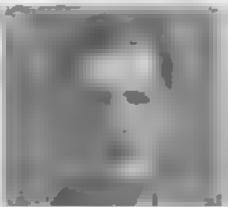
**Sgt. W. A. DIDLUCK**  
R.A.F.V.R.  
Action: Italy 18.4.44  
Age 2 (Abergavenny)



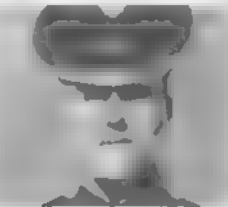
**Gdsmn. J. J. GEE**  
Grenadier Guards.  
Died: P.O.W. 3.11.41  
Age 29 (Manchester)



**Cpl. W. HANAWAY**  
Royal Marines.  
Action: Atlantic March '42.  
Age 34 (Manchester)



**L. Cpl. N. HARDY**  
King's Own Royal Regt.  
Action: Laros 16.12.43  
Age 21 (Convey Island)



**L. Sgt. B. HENDERSON**  
Irish Guards.  
Action: N. Africa 29.4.43  
Age 23 (Belfast)



**L. Sgt. G. HOWARTH**  
253 B. H.A.A., R.A.  
Lost at sea Nov. 43  
Age 25 (St. Asaph)



**Cpl. B. S. E. HUDOLE**  
2nd Monmouthshire Regt.  
Action: Rechem 11.4.45.  
Age 34 (Pinner)



**L. Cpl. E. HOWELLS**  
South Wales Borderers  
Yugoslavia 7.10.44.  
Age 25 (Swansea)



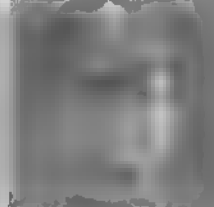
**Pte. D. L. HUGHES**  
R. Army Ordnance Corps.  
D. wds. Tobruk 2.12.41.  
Age 27 (Haverford)



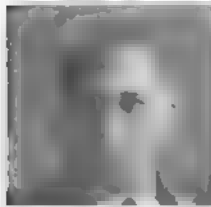
**Gnr. T. INGHAM**  
88 Field Regt. R.A.  
P.O.W. Siam 29.7.43.  
Age 21 (Pinner)



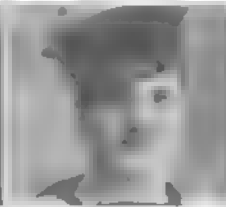
**Gdsmn. J. JARDINE**  
1st Bn. Scots Guards.  
Action: Tunisia 21.4.43  
Age 31 (Dumfries)



**L. Cpl. W. J. JONES**  
Royal Engineers  
N.W. Europe 12.9.44  
Age 35 (Braunstone)



**Sgt. R. M. JOHNSON**  
Royal Air Force.  
Action: Stuttgart 29.7.44.  
Age 21 (W. Molesey)



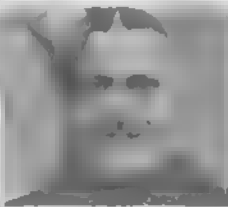
**O. S. J. G. KITCHING**  
H.M.S. Nubian.  
Action: at sea 26.5.41  
Age 21 (Esh Winning)



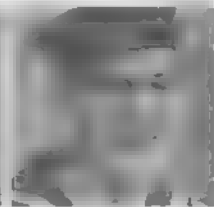
**L. Cpl. W. LAURIE**  
Scots Guards.  
Action: Caen 30.7.44.  
Age 27 (Barnsley)



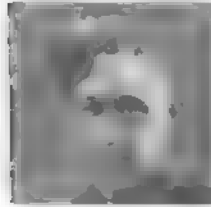
**Sgt. N. LEES**  
467 Sq. R.A.F.  
Action: Staffs 3.1.45.  
Age 19 (Dunfermline)



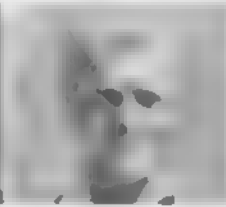
**Gnr. J. MABBUTT**  
Royal Artillery.  
Action: Accroma 16.6.42.  
Age 32 (Hawthorn)



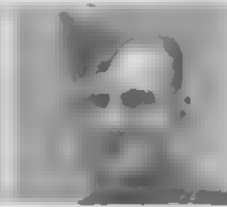
**Sdr. W. J. PAYNE**  
Royal Navy.  
Action: N. Sea 10.6.41  
Age 2 (Kings Lynn)



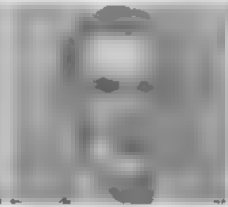
**Dvr. H. PURKIS**  
Royal Army Service Corps.  
Greece 28.4.41.  
Age 29 (Leamington)



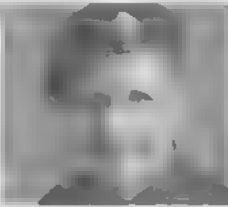
**Pte. J. G. REYNOLDS**  
Green Howards.  
P.O.W. Tobruk 7.6.42.  
Age 26 (Wilton, Gloucestershire)



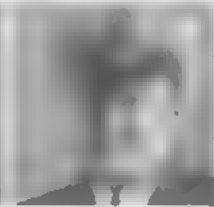
**Cpl. A. RICHMOND**  
Queen's Royal Regiment.  
Action: Holland 22.10.44.  
Age 28 (Swansea)



**Pte. R. ROBINSON**  
York & Lancaster Regt.  
Action: Italy 13.10.44.  
Age 2 (Shildon)



**Tpr. J. RYAN**  
144 R.A.C.  
Action: Caen 7.8.44.  
Age 26 (Swansea)



**C.P.O. C. V. SHORT**  
Royal Navy.  
Missing. 17.1.42.  
Age 44 (Plymouth)



**Tpr. A. M. SMITH**  
3rd Recon. Regt. R.N.I.  
Action: Vire 6.8.44.  
Age 23 (Corbridge)



**Sgt. Nav. A. THOMSON**  
Royal Air Force.  
Over Germany 10.7.43.  
Age 20 (Buckhaven)



**A.S.P.O. THORNTON**  
H.M.S. Gloucester.  
Action: Crete 22.5.41.  
Age 33 (Widnes)



**A. B. J. VURLEY**  
Royal Navy.  
Action: Anzio 29.1.44.  
Age 35 (Preston)



**L.A.C. B. D. WICKHAM**  
Royal Air Force.  
Canada 15.3.42.  
Age 20 (Glaston)



**Pte. C. E. WILES**  
7th Bn. Black Watch.  
Action: N.W. Europe 16.8.44.  
Age 19 (Ilkerton)

# I Was There

THE HUMAN STORY OF 1939-1946

## 'I Will Lead You Again!' Said Monty

With the last of our battle-weary troops to leave the Dunkirk Beaches in June 1940, Grenadier Guardsman A. A. Shuttlewood took part in the nightmare withdrawal from Furnes—and lived to listen to a heartening prophecy made by Field-Marshal (then Major-General) Montgomery.

We left Furnes, eight miles inland from the Belgian coast and 16 miles east of Dunkirk, after three days and nights of ceaseless bombing and shelling. It was there that we had lost our Commanding Officer, Lieut.-Colonel J. Lloyd, and two Company Commanders, victims of snipers' bullets. (See story in page 760, Vol. 9). Considering the enemy's fierce attempts to blast a way into Dunkirk itself, and the stiff resistance we put up to prevent him doing so, my battalion's losses were fairly light. But the other two battalions of the 7th Guards Brigade—the 1st Grenadier and 1st Coldstream Guards—suffered heavy casualties, mainly due to their heroic defence along the banks of the Albert Canal, north of Louvain, at the beginning of the campaign.

The road to Dunkirk was littered with fallen telegraph poles and wires, broken glass and shell craters; the sky was brilliantly lit by flares and gun-flashes. The leading elements of the battalion wore sacking tied beneath their boots to deaden the sound of approach to the beach zone; enemy infiltration had been rife, and we were taking no chances. We were dog-tired, for we had had little sleep for the past week. Arduous forced marches had been our lot since May 12; one of them had exceeded 30 miles, which, wearing full equipment, is no mean feat of endurance. Thus final trek to the beach seemed the worst of all—after three weeks of absolute hell on earth.

Dunkirk loomed well to our rear, its shell-wrecked buildings like jagged grey spectres in the half-light provided by incessant gunfire all around us. British naval guns belched tongues of flame from the Channel, to our right; their missiles screamed over our

heads, to land amongst enemy concentrations with explosions which shook the sand beneath our feet. German batteries, inland, fired salvo after salvo into the beach area, here at last we were halted, and ordered to dig ourselves in.

### On the Shell-Spattered Beach

The crump of shells was drawing closer, and it seemed that the deeper we dug the greater was the quantity of sand which trickled back into the holes. Fortunate ones amongst us possessed short-hafted entrenching tools. Others scooped out holes with their bare hands. However, we completed our slit-trenches and quickly took advantage of them. Suddenly the guns became silent. The first pale rays of dawn broke through the barrier of darkness to glimmer wanly on the

shell-spattered and bomb-cratered beach... It was dawn of June 2, 1940.

We could see the silhouettes of naval vessels offshore, thousands of them, it seemed, of all shapes and sizes, all having one set purpose: to rescue the living and the wounded remnants of the B.E.F. from the enemy's baffled fury. The coming of dawn heralded the reappearance of enemy planes, which zoomed down at us, unleashing their bomb-burdens and raking the beach with machine-gun fire. They came over at regular intervals of about ten minutes or so, and we blazed away with Bren-guns and rifles. Three lots came, and went. But they did slight damage.

Then followed a lull of about twenty minutes, and we were reassembled and trekked onward along the beach. Bodies lay sprawled in the sand, some covered with blankets and great-coats. Smashed vehicles were grouped between the dunes. Weapons of former evacuees (for this was the rear-guard of an evacuation which had commenced several days before) were to be seen littering the water's edge.



With the turn of the tide the big ships nosed farther inland; boats were lowered, and drew nearer. Wounded men were the first to go aboard, many hands aiding them. When all the wounded were safely in the boats we were permitted to wade out to sea and to clamber on board. I am over six feet, yet the water lapped above my shoulders. Many of the smaller fellows were forced to swim for it. The boat I boarded, filled to capacity with its human cargo, headed out into the Channel and drew alongside a minesweeper, and we climbed the rope ladders. Soaked to the skin, we descended into the engine and boiler rooms, undressed, and enjoyed a brisk rub-down with towels which were readily provided by members of the crew out of their own kit.

Then, the bark of hundreds of guns sounded—ack-ack guns blaring away at Hun dive-bombers. In varying states of undress, we went up on deck to witness the fight. I saw a destroyer hit, amidships, and small figures crowding on her deck. I saw seven of the dive-bombers receive direct hits; four



ABANDONED BRITISH BOFORS GUNS on the Dunkirk beaches (above) still pointed defiance to the skies when the last of the B.E.F. had been evacuated in June 1940. Some of the rear-guard (top) who had made arduous forced marches for three weeks, found time for much-needed foot treatment before embarking. PAGE 473 Photo: E. H. Bond, Associated Press

## I Was There!



**GRENADIER GUARDSMEN RETURNING FROM DUNKIRK** In June 1940 had not failed to maintain the magnificent tradition of their Regiment. Here, heavy-eyed and weary, but still showing something of their parade-ground smartness, they are disembarking at Dover from the ship which had evacuated them from the deadly beaches. Only a few hours before, with the rearguard of the B.E.F., they had fought tenaciously to retain the slender hold on the soil of France. See accompanying story by Guardsman Shuttlewood, and pages 7-11. *Photo, The Times*

exploded before they reached the water. The planes sheered off, and the evacuation continued. The embattled array of our naval might, stretching for miles along the beach, was a stirring sight.

We set sail for Dover—and home. Words cannot describe the reception we were given at the quayside. Steaming cups of tea, cigarettes, cakes and biscuits were bestowed upon us; and, most important and reassuring of all, smiles of welcome. When we reached our destination, after a hot meal the order of the day was "Sleep!" The orderlies of the huts allotted to us were instructed to "Let them sleep it out. Don't waken them." When I finally awoke I discovered that I had slept for 21 hours. There were men in the same hut still deep in blessed sleep.

My battalion reformed at Shaftesbury, Dorset, several days later. Here, Major-General Bernard Montgomery visited us, and congratulated the 7th Guards Brigade upon its splendid showing throughout the three weeks of the campaign. Incidentally Major-General Montgomery (as he was then) had commanded the 3rd Division in Belgium and France, of which our Brigade formed a part. He made this prophecy:

"We will return to France one day, you and I. We will rout the Hun—smash him and his beliefs. I will lead you again, and you will follow me. And next time (God grant it be soon) we will be equipped with the very best: the very best weapons for the very best troops!" How magnificently that prophecy was fulfilled the world now knows.

and other devices, for the approach of hostile submarines or aircraft. All ships maintained doubled look-outs to scan sea and sky; for this voyage was undertaken at the period before the British battles in Tunisia and Sicily had been fought and won, and no one but a blind optimist expected a Malta-bound convoy to go through without a tough fight. We proceeded westward on a zigzag course, thereby increasing the journey of 920 miles—a four-days' voyage at the convoy's speed—and approached the first zone of peak danger in the 150-miles-wide stretch of sea between Derna on the North Africa coast and the island of Crete.

TOWARD the close of the second day urgent warning was given and "Action Stations" sounded. Soon a wave of German bombers swept in at a great height toward the convoy like vultures to a feast, and the warships put up a terrific barrage. A few bombs raised columns of foam in the sea, then the Huns hurriedly took the sky-road for home. It was plain they had no stomach for infighting against the punching power of the Royal Navy. Our watchdogs—that formidable array of warships—made a comforting spectacle. After the Huns had bottled off, I turned to the storekeeper.

"Well, Charlie," I said, "we're as safe as houses on this trip." He relighted his pipe. "I hope you're right, Horace," he drawled. "But there's some houses near where I live at Birkenhead that haven't been so safe." All was plain sailing for the next thirty-six hours. Charlie and several others were inclined to bet we would get through safely. Hopes of avoiding serious trouble, however, were dampened by signals flashed from the cruiser flying the flag of the Senior Naval Officer.

"The Italian fleet is out!" That was the dramatic message which had been received in code over the radio by the S.N.O.'s ship and passed to all vessels in the convoy. Soon came orders from the Commander-in-Chief, and these in turn were communicated to the warships and four merchantmen. The next thing we saw was our escort threshing up to full speed on a northerly course on another hunt for Musso's phantom-like navy, and so we were left to fend entirely for ourselves. We had become mere pawns in a greater game, and whereas the Italians proved elusive as usual, it is noteworthy that only a few days later—on March 28—the Battle Fleet under Admiral Cunningham smashed

## A Chief Steward in Battle Malta-Bound

When the S.S. Pampas was running the gauntlet in convoy to Malta in March 1942 the escort of eight cruisers and 20 destroyers was suddenly called away and the fully laden merchant ships were left to fend for themselves. The lively story is told by Chief Steward Horace Carswell, D.S.M., M.M., B.E.M. (See also portrait and story in page 27.)

I WAS at Montevideo in December 1940 when the German pocket-battleship Admiral Graf Spee sunk into port; and I saw the funeral of her commander, Captain Langsdorff, after his crippled ship had been scuttled. On the homeward voyage of the Pampas from Buenos Aires to Tilbury our passengers included Captain Dove of the Africa Shell, and other British prisoners whom Captain Langsdorff had released when he knew his raiding days were over. (See story in pages 413 and 443.)

On reaching England I was transferred to another ship, which happened to be in dock at Liverpool during the German bombing raids that lasted for three nights. Two nights of the blitz were enough for our Negro cook, who departed down the gangway after exclaiming to me, "Aw, hell! I ain't a-goin' to stay here, boss!" He took train for Manchester, where, by the irony of fate, his arrival coincided with the worst air raid on that city. So he came back next day to the ship at Liverpool, and on getting a cool reception from me, retorted warmly, "Aw, hell! I ain't a-goin' to stay there, boss!"

About the time when the 8th Army was pushing Rommel's alleged "invincibles" out of Libya I was again Chief Steward in the Pampas, which was really a fast cargo-carrier, although we had previously conveyed

passengers on occasions. Our job was to take a vital cargo of tanks, speedboats and munitions to Port Said via the Cape, and we got through safely and discharged according to schedule. This done, we proceeded to Alexandria and loaded up again, with arms and general supplies for Malta, which was having a rough time from German and Italian bombers based across the narrows of the Mediterranean.

### Dramatic Message Over the Radio

The Pampas left the Egyptian port on March 20, 1942, in convoy with three other fully laden merchant ships, to run the gauntlet through a zone where sea and sky were infested by the enemy. Malta's urgent need was known to us all, and the importance of our convoy was evident from the fact that no less than eight British cruisers and twenty destroyers gave us a protective screen. Only one alarm was sounded in the early part of the voyage, and a single German plane came over for a "look-see." The A.A. guns of the naval escorts loosed off a few rounds, and the scout departed at top speed. But the incident was disturbing, because we knew the convoy had been located.

Specialist ratings aboard the warships listened constantly, with the aid of the asdic



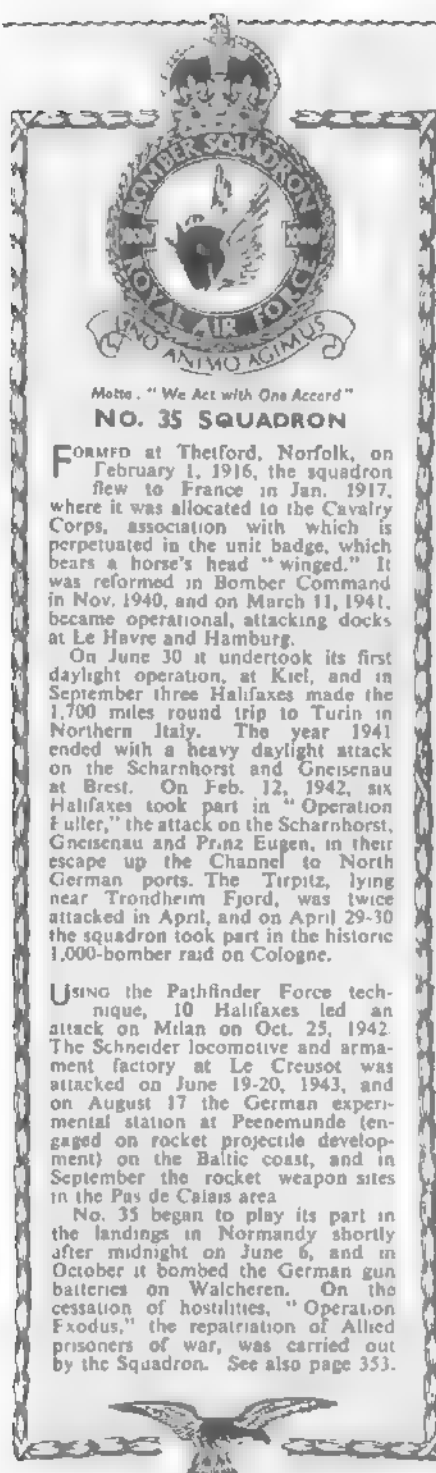
## Rough Journey's End at Beleaguered Malta



TROOPS GARRISONING THE GEORGE CROSS ISLAND had a hearty welcome for every friendly vessel arriving in 1942. Members of the crew of the leading ship (1, left) of a convoy which had successfully run the air-and-sea gauntlet hail the shore. A German dive-bomber flying high (2) after a hit-and-run raid. The S.S. Pampas (3), caught in a welter of bombs dropped on the waterfront. See story on facing page.

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two enemy squadrons in the night action off Matapan, which had a vital effect on subsequent operations in the Mediterranean.

WHILE the smoke of our escorts faded on the horizon, the Pampas and the other three cargo-carriers held a westerly course. With every turn of the propellers we cut the distance to Valetta—the port of Malta—and also to Sicily, stiff with bases of the enemy air forces. There was no surprise when the alarm bells rang. The Luftwaffe was in the air, and at the first threat our four merchant ships separated widely and made zigzag courses at the best speed possible. No longer able to rely on an intense naval barrage, they would have presented an easier target if bunched together. The combined armament of all four cargo-carriers making up the convoy was less than that of a single destroyer of the Royal Navy.

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## I Was There!

The Pampas went into action in self-defence directly the first two or three German bombers appeared. We had one gun of medium calibre, and a few Oerlikons and Lewis guns—enough, anyway, to put the Huns off-aim a bit. The other three ships of our small convoy, one a Norwegian, made a brave show with their light armament while manoeuvring in the general direction of Malta and keeping in sight of one another. The first bombs that came screaming down did harm to nothing except the fish. But attacks developed apace. The Luftwaffe ran a shuttle service from Sicily, bent on preventing the ships and cargoes from winning through. Bombers came over two or three at a time, and presently by the dozen. They attacked from heights varying to close upon sea level, and occasionally Stukas came thundering down in power-dives that made the severest test on the nerves of our lads manning the guns.

### Meals Were Served Amid the Battle

For hours that day the entire crews of the merchant ships were dealing with attack after attack until the light defensive guns became red-hot. The Pampas had her fair share of attention, and there was no time for officers or men to leave their posts to take meals in the ordinary way. One of my tasks—the most important perhaps—was to keep the crew fed well, as opportunity served, and thereby help maintain their strength and morale throughout the ordeal. My staff worked with a will, and I cannot speak too highly of the way they carried on with normal domestic duties amid the battle.

It was not part of my regular job to carry trays about, but extra help was needed. Taking food and beverages over the exposed decks to the bridge, gun positions, engine-room and storerooms, was not without excitement as the Pampas shuddered and lurched from the effect of near-misses, and fragments of bomb casings spattered the hull. The job of Chief Steward tends to inculcate *sang froid*, or at least provide a veneer of this quality. When things go very wrong the geniality may be varied by the raising of an eyebrow in a slightly pained expression, which is about all the outward emotion the role of Chief Steward permits.

It pleases me to recall that this appearance of calm and sweet reasonableness was an asset in that grim battle on the Malta route. The sweating, grimy lads behind the gun-shields found comfort in my somewhat portly presence, and received a benediction with the hot food served to them. Perhaps they thought, "It can't be so bad, or old Horace wouldn't be ambling about," forgetful that appearances may be deceptive.

Suddenly a German aircraft burst into flames and spiralled into the sea. An exuberant signal by daylight flash-lamp was made from our bridge: "One to us!" To which another sorely harassed ship retorted: "That was our bird!"—thereby starting an argument which continued in a sporting spirit after another Hun had gone hurtling out of the blue like a fiery comet. Two of the merchant ships were hit, and suffered casualties. But the convoy steamed on. It is not possible to estimate the tonnage of bombs that came screaming down that day.

The most formidable attack developed when we were within sight of the Malta citadel, two of the cargo-carriers receiving direct hits in vital compartments. Both sank in a matter of minutes, their passing marked by columns of smoke while survivors in the lifeboats headed for port through a sea lashed into foam by cannon shells and machine-gun bullets. Luck and judgement combined to save the Pampas, and the other vessel manned by Norwegians, and we reached Valetta with comparatively slight damage. Meantime, the Malta batteries drove off the enemy, who suffered further losses from R.A.F. fighters in air-battles to the shores of Sicily.

What a welcome awaited us! Crowds thronged every vantage point round the Grand Harbour as our two sorely scarred merchant ships moved to their berths at the quayside. Almost before the cheering had died away the winches were clattering and derricks discharging the precious cargo. Although the Pampas and her Norwegian consort had made port our ordeal was not over. German and Italian aircraft were still in strength within easy striking distance of the island, and Rommel's army had not yet been kicked out of North Africa. But the defences of Malta were stronger than heretofore, and the raiders were no longer having the easy ride of former days. On an average, one out of every five hostile planes failed to return to base. A red-and-white flag was hoisted when it became certain that raiders were on the way and Malta was the likely target. Orders were that we all had to leave our ships—crews and stevedores alike—and go to the dugouts and tunnels ashore. Those places were almost impregnable, but our nerves had a shaking one day when a bomb exploded directly on top of the dugout where I and several shipmates were sheltering.

### We Had Lost All But Our Lives

One day the warning signal was followed by the most determined air raid for weeks. Eighty German bombers came over, accompanied by several Italians, and within a few minutes the dockside area was an inferno. We huddled in our shelters while bombs crashed on the battered waterfront and plane after plane dived upon the two merchant ships moored at the quay. In a short time the Norwegian was ablaze from stem to stern. Whilst the fire raged, a bomb fell plumb through the squat funnel and exploded in the engine-room—and that was the end of one stout ship.

The Pampas survived only a little longer. Hammered beyond hope of salvage, she lay partly submerged in wreckage when the raiders had gone and the smoke and dust still drifted over the oil-strewn waters of the Grand Harbour. We emerged from our dugouts and dazedly surveyed the destruction. We had lost all but our lives and the clothes we wore. Our employment was gone. As Distressed British Seamen, we were dependent now on the good offices of the Royal Navy to take us to our home-port in England. In due course the cruiser H.M.S. Aurora gave us passage, and I wasn't the only one who was heartily glad to leave the "hot-shop" now honoured by the title of "The George Cross Island."

## Let's Give the Nazi Devil His Due

Wounded on the road to Dunkirk, Sergeant Charles J. Sadgrove, Royal Signals, was captured in a casualty clearing station at Krombeek on May 30, 1940. Sent first to Stalag XXA, Thorn, and later to XXB, Marienburg, he describes some of the Germans he met in five years as a prisoner of war.

I SHALL never forget the camp commandant who brandished his revolver on every conceivable occasion, or the brutality of many of the guards on our enforced march across Germany. But many of the Nazis

had themselves been prisoners in the First Great War and had some understanding of our plight. Others were considerate towards us because they had suffered under the Hitler regime. And there were those who

## I Was There!



STALAG XXB, Marienburg, viewed from the main gates. Here the author of this story spent much of his time as a P.O.W.

were soldiers only because they had to be and who tried to be helpful to us.

There was a feldwebel (our rank of sergeant) who had charge of us for a time in our camp in East Prussia. "Lon Chaney" we called him, because of the wounds that scarred and twisted his face. We had reason to know that his heart was in its proper place, for no man, of whatever nationality, could have argued more for prisoners' rights. We men wanted time off for Sunday work—he saw that we got it. The billet needed redecorating—he arranged for it to be done. Swimming facilities were asked for in the nearby river—he saw that we got them. Canteen stocks were low—he arranged regular shopping expeditions. Every day we ticked off on a list the various things he had done for us.

### Our Rights as Prisoners of War

With him as a guard was a youngster from Saxony, whom we knew as Harry. A front-line soldier (he was wounded in Russia) he was never too tired to do us a kindness—it might be the arranging of a football match with a neighbouring camp, a railway journey into Stalag XXB, Marienburg, a local shopping expedition, or merely a trip to the post-office for parcels. Most ex-prisoners of war remember a Franz or a Willy or a Fritz who "forgot" to lock the billet at night, or who did something else equally praiseworthy in their eyes. Best of all were those guards who stuck by their "Englanders" on the march, foraged for food for them when they themselves were hungry, or shared with us their own dwindling smoke ration.

Although under strict military discipline, those of us out on working parties contacted not a few civilians. Many of these well earned the title "swines" with which they frequently chose to label us. But there were good as well as bad civilians; among the best was the old carter who was often accused of sabotage for absenting himself from work in order to collect for us our Red Cross food parcels. Contact with womenfolk was especially forbidden. But circumstances made it impossible to avoid breaches of this regulation. Prisoners were made to work in the fields and factories alongside women and girls, some of them old, but many remarkably attractive. As leader of a working party, I came in daily contact with them.

First to my mind comes one whom we found in charge of the kitchen at our billet, and who watched our interests among the shopkeepers of the town. Her sales talk on our behalf left nothing to be desired. She would be told in one shop, perhaps, that potatoes were scarce; therefore, the prisoners would have to go short until the civilians



RIVAL TEAM CAPTAINS (left), with referee, toss for choice of ends on Stalag XXB's football ground. Photos, International Red Cross

an inferior quality, and all those who attempted in any way to sidetrack their obligations towards us.

My companions did not always see eye-to-eye with this woman. Their usual suspicions of the "Quarter-bloke" were now directed at her. She was "in the rackets," they said. If by that they meant that she was frequently to be seen smoking an English cigarette, they forgot her good works on our behalf, the number of eggs, white rolls, butter, first-quality jam and other commodities she risked her freedom to bring into the camp on an exchange basis.

It was the same with the woman in charge of the works' kitchen, to which, normally, we had no right of entry. The men suspected her of tampering with their rations. They forgot the times she left the vegetable cellar unlocked so that our cooks might help themselves, of the odds and ends with which she supplied us from time to time to improve our "Mittagessen," by which name we came to know our midday soup. A neighbour to whom most of us were endeared was the wife of the caretaker of our billet. Her poultry were fed on most of our kitchen scraps, and in return there wasn't a tool or pot of paint in her husband's workshop that was not ours for the asking. She even lent us her precious electric iron with which to put a crease in our Sunday suits.

### We Bought "Under the Counter"

There was a girl of about twenty in the works' kitchen who bore us no animosity, despite the fact that her family had been killed and her home destroyed in an air raid. Very friendly, too, were the sisters whose dressmaking business in Berlin had been closed to them for ever; many were the tailoring jobs they did for us in exchange for a little chocolate or a smoke. Generally speaking, the shopkeepers were most helpful, selling us everything that was in their power to sell, even at the risk of offending their civilian customers. One greengrocer always gave us preference, as did the woman in the local chemist's shop, while the manageress of a music shop in a nearby town had the "under the counter" system to a fine art as far as we were concerned. One staunch supporter was the proprietress of a local distillery where we bought lemonade for the canteen. A competitor lodged a complaint with the police regarding her excessive sales to us. Straightway she telephoned the authorities at Marienburg in protest. Their protection was granted, and authorization given for continued sales to us.

The enforced march gave us little opportunity to contact civilians, men or women,



CHARLES SADDGROVE (left), leader of a P.O.W. working party, and a companion at Stalag XXA, Thorn, Germany, in 1941.

## I Was There!

but I remember the help given to me by the married daughter of the burgomaster of a little town in the province of Mecklenburg-Schwerin where we rested for a few days. By interceding with her father she got for us extra things, such as potatoes and peas for our soup, and fuel for our kitchen fires. For me she collected dainties the like of which I had not seen for many a day. When I went to say good-bye there were tears in her eyes.

A final memory is coupled with sadness at the loss of a comrade. His death occurred a few days before the Americans arrived to liberate us, in April 1945. The privations had proved too much for him, and we buried him in a grave alongside others of our party who had succumbed to months of suffering

and hardship. We were without the usual guard; the commandant had not thought one necessary in view of the rapid approach of the Allied forces, and the womenfolk who had been interested sightseers of our simple ceremony plucked up sufficient courage to come and talk with us.

Their condolences for the dead quickly turned to practical consideration of the living: they ran to their respective homes to bring us, the one bread and cakes, another soup and meat, a third coffee and cigarettes. I should like to call these Germans typical of their race, but—well, in a land where bestiality and cruelty were commonplace it was indeed refreshing to find those in whom some spark of decency remained.

"Warning—Mines and Booby Traps—Read the Notice in your Bedroom!" I did, and refrained from prying too closely into houses on the Atlantic Wall, and the adjoining sand dunes: this certainly was no time to die!

I spent my spare day wandering through Bruges, the so-called Venice of the North, but I was not enraptured. The city was dirty, untidy, the canals scum-ridden and frowsty-smelling, the people very sombrely dressed, and I disliked the sight of so many dog-propelled carriers, although the dogs in most instances looked frisky enough in their harness. At last came the day of sailing. It opened with two pleasures, first a little card with Monty's signature on it, which I found on my breakfast plate, being a message of thanks and Godspeed, and second, the changing of foreign currency into sterling. English silver which never excited me before did so now—it symbolized the passage Home.

## The Couldn't Care Less League

I now imagined myself free of all further military responsibility. But no. My name rang out over the ship's loud-hailer as the officer commanding the Oxford draft. This involved, I quickly discovered, some responsibility for personal documents and—a far heavier task—organization of a fatigue party to brush decks after the trip. By loud-hailer I called for two officers, who in turn called for two W.O.s, and eventually by resort to some luckless gunners and privates two sweeping parties were laid on. I fear all members belonged to the C.C.L. (Couldn't Care Less) League; but the job was done.

Our boat, the Prince Charles, manned by a Flemish crew, reached Dover at 5 p.m., and after a short delay we stood behind our kit and baggage in the Customs sheds. A ticklish moment. Especially for one officer with £70 in his pocket available for meeting his dues. But, by a complete mischance, someone unknown to him passed through the Customs his heaviest case, containing spirits and some Zeiss glasses, and with this lucky let-off he counted out a mere £5 of his wad. I found the officials most reluctant to levy charges. They didn't demand, "Have you any wines or liqueurs? Have you any scent?" They said, "You haven't a camera, have you?"—and so on.

At Dover a hot meal was served us—meat chunks and greasy globules. It tallied not at all with our Overseas standards. "First

## I Waited Six Years to Collect It

A jeep-ride from Central Germany to the Belgian coast and a train journey in fog-bound Eastern England form the background of these reminiscences by John Fortinbras, who in the autumn of 1945 travelled 1,000 miles to collect a Civvy Suit and be demobilized. His narrative will revive in many readers of "The War Illustrated" memories of their own Home-coming.

"SEE you in Civvy Street!" were my final words to those I left on service. Fellow B.A.O.R. officers, with their release groups recently frozen, looked rueful and shrugged their shoulders. But I was too elated with my own freedom to pay much heed to their problems. . . . In the early hours I left the ruins of Hanover, bound for the port of Ostend. I dodged the rail journey, primarily because of affection for my jeep; in it, through many hazards, I had travelled without mishap 19,630 miles to date, and the urge to knock up the 20,000th mile was irresistible.

We raced over wet, slippery roads via Minden, thence by the Reichautobahn to the borders of Hamm of railway (or is it Bomber Command?) fame, and thereafter by route 240, over the Rhine at Xanten, into Holland, through Venlo and Roermond alongside the Maas and into Belgium by Maaseyck. It felt queer to travel through places like the villages close to Venlo which a year ago, as an artilleryman, I had stonked day and night. I gazed at a church, once a suspected enemy O.P., which we had sniped with heavy guns from 12,000 yards, and noted the rents we had torn in it.

We celebrated our 20,000th mile at a spot between Diest and Louvain, recalling former

narrow squeaks and humiliations there, including confinement for some crucial minutes, during the previous winter, in Dutch snow, from which we had been rescued by two big-limbed horses, and half a dozen Dutch yokels who shoved as hard as the horses pulled.

I stayed the night with friends—a Belgian notary and his wife—at Braine le Comte, receiving wonderful hospitality, and my driver was similarly feasted. My hostess deplored the heavy prices in the black market—2,000 francs for a cycle tire, 120 francs for a pound of butter, 90 francs for a pound of meat, and (most iniquitous of all) 2,600 francs for a pair of thin-soled shoes for her nine-year-old daughter. As 175 Belgian francs ran to the pound sterling, that last item put the price of a child's shoes at no less than £15 a pair.

Next day we travelled on via Soignies, the market centre for Belgium's great cart-horses, Alost, Ghent, and so to Ostend. I reached No. 1 Embarkation Release Camp at 1.30 p.m.—just 30 minutes too late; for 1.0 p.m. was zero hour for sailing arrangements. Instead, therefore, of sailing the next day I would have to wait until the day after. The lift in the Hotel Metropole in the Rue d'Eglise, where I was billeted, was placarded:



TO CIVVY STREET BY EASY STAGES is the basis of the plan for demobilizing Servicemen due for release under the Age and Service Group system. queuing up to hand in their documents (left) at No. 12 Transit Camp, Tournai, Belgium. For the "birds of passage" the camp offers facilities and amenities calculated to charm the heart of officers and other ranks, not the least popular being a spacious and comfortably appointed reading-room (right). A permanent staff of British soldiers and Belgians gives first-class service.



## I Was There!



**EXCHANGING LOCAL CURRENCY FOR ENGLISH MONEY** at No. 112 Transit Camp, Tournai (left), brings demobilization a step nearer. But much land and some water has to be crossed before selection of the civilian outfit. At the clothing depot at Olympia, London, five who are making the great come-back (right) have donned the headwear of the man-in-the-street, and soon will be on the last lap Home with their newly acquired possessions in cardboard boxes. See also illus. page 619, Vol. 2. Photo, British Official, Keystone

taste of Civvy Street, gentlemen!" grinned one of the party's live spirits. Then, at 7 p.m., we moved away by special train for Oxford, and we were soon enveloped in fog. It was well after midnight when we arrived at Oxford, thence a coach ride to Slade Disembarkation Camp. "Should have a V in place of the D," said a disgruntled, over-weary M.O. as, beyond the illuminated sign, we saw the severe outlines of Nissen huts. "They ought to see my Continental chalet and keep up the standards," commented another pessimist.

We ate well here. After bedding down at 2 a.m., we breakfasted at 8.0, having had the usual 7.15 cup of tea, an Army custom mercifully sustained to the end. So began our final day. We handed in surplus kit and received notice of train timings to dispersal centres. I found it would be 3.0 p.m. before my train was due to leave for Northampton. I idled away the morning in Oxford, and thought how providential for England that our land-battles had been fought out elsewhere.

### "Tha's Always Worse to Cum!"

Just before we boarded the Northampton train a tragedy befell one of us. He put down his suitcase in the yard of Oxford station and left it unattended for a few moments to fetch other baggage. Meanwhile, a lorry charged over it, and his wines and liqueurs, the prizes of his European campaign, so carefully packed and treasured, oozed out of the crumpled remains—a cracked, soggy, pathetic mess.

At Northampton, an Army lorry whisked us to Talavera Barracks. Documentation was quickly completed. I give the organization at all three centres—Ostend, Oxford and here—full marks for their efficiency, and an extra 10 per cent for unfailing politeness and courtesy. Then came the acquisition of the Civvy Suit. "You can get £18 for what they give you at the clothing centre!" whispered a man to me, confidentially. But I wasn't interested. I admired the quick service system, with a tailor at the entrance to take one's measurements, a girl clerk who wrote them down, and courteous direction to the clothing stalls whose wares tallied with the figures.

In no time, it seemed, I gathered up a blue suit, raincoat, pair of black shoes, shirt, hat, two collars, tie, two pairs of socks,

collar studs, and a pair of cuff links; the least promising of these possessions were, I thought, the socks which, conforming to the most spartan utility cut, couldn't possibly extend more than half-an-inch above the shin bone. And why, I wondered, no handkerchiefs? Not even one. I drew my eight weeks' ration of cigarettes, paid for at duty-free prices, and two weeks' sweets ration, ate a hasty but appetizing dinner in the Officers' Mess, and was dumped with all my belongings and the cardboard box of clothing at the Castle Station, well in time to catch the train to Peterborough, and from there the 11.0 p.m. connexion to my East Anglian home.

A more dismal conveyance than the Northampton to Peterborough train can hardly exist in Europe. It started twenty minutes late. It stopped at every station. It never hurried. The porters who served it called out the names of stations in accents more difficult to understand than two or three foreign languages. . . . I reflected bitterly on the hundreds of comfortable railway installations which the War had des-

troyed. One of my companions, an R.A.S.C. officer, huddled miserably in a corner, having abandoned all hope of catching his 9.30 p.m. connexion to York, was mournfully philosophic. "Doan't mind if things be glum," he said, quoting the old Yorkshire tag. "Tha's always worse to cum!"

Our spirits brightened when a newly demobbed padre, an Irishman brimming over with cheerfulness, began pushing a porter's barrow laden with our baggage along the Peterborough platform. Cold and subdued, I finished my journey in his company, together with a colonel newly returned from West Africa and facing acclimatization to chill and foggy nights. I walked home, ate a supper thoughtfully laid out for me, looked at my watch—it indicated 3.0 a.m.—and crept into bed, without rousing anyone. It seemed the best way to begin one's civilian life by appearing suddenly, as it were, at breakfast. And then, in the morning, I lacked moral courage: I hesitated to don that Civvy Suit. The more I looked at it the more comfortable and familiar appeared my travel-stained old battle-dress.

## NEW FACTS AND FIGURES

**A**T the British Legion Poppy Factory at Richmond, Surrey—largest factory in the world employing only disabled labour—disabled men of the Second Great War are now working beside veterans of the First Great War. Numbered among the recent recruits are former Commandos and Airborne troops.

**F**OR this year's Poppy Day appeal (Nov. 9) 45,000,000 were made, of which 3,000,000 were shipped to 54 countries overseas, including supplies to the British forces in Germany, Italy and Japan. In the manufacture of poppies and wreaths this year the factory used 100 miles of material, 1,700 miles of wire and 17 tons of metal. A big warehouse staffed by ex-Servicemen is kept busy all the year round shipping the poppies to all parts of the world and preparing collecting boxes and trays for the annual appeal. See illus. in page 450.

**C**UNARD-WHITE Star liner Mauretania, arriving at Liverpool from Canada on September 1, 1946, was released from Government service. The work of completely refitting the ship will take about five months. During the years 1939-1946 the Mauretania steamed nearly 600,000 miles and carried more than 330,000 passengers and troops.

**R**EPATRIATION of German P.O.W. from the United Kingdom began at the end of September 1946 at the initial rate of 15,000 per month. The scheme applies to all German prisoners in Britain except senior officers and those known to be strongly pro-Nazi. About 394,000 prisoners were eligible; of these, 158,000 were engaged on agricultural work; 50,000 were employed by the War Office on labour duties and 36,000 in camp duties; 35,000 by the Ministry of Works and 19,500 by the Air Ministry.

**T**HE British and U.S. Military Governments on September 5, 1946, announced agreement on the economic merger of their zones in Germany. Five joint boards were set up: Food and Agriculture at Bad Kissingen (U.S. zone); Finance, at Frankfurt-on-Main (U.S. zone); Economics, at Minden (British); Transport, at Bielefeld and Hamburg (British); and Communications.

**M**ORE than 170,000 tons of food were imported into the British zone in Germany during August 1946. Among these were 59,000 tons of wheat from Britain, Canada and the U.S.A.; 95,982 tons of potatoes from Britain, Holland and Czechoslovakia; 17,833 tons of fresh vegetables from Britain and Norway; and 930 tons of meat from Britain.



## U.S. 100-ton Tank That Never Went to War



**DESIGNED TO BATTER THROUGH HITLER'S WEST WALL,** this 100-ton tank, the U.S. Army's heaviest, was shown for the first time to the public at the recently held Twenty-eighth Annual Meeting of the U.S. Army Ordnance Association, at Aberdeen, Maryland. In addition to its size, the most notable feature is the 105-mm. gun, set in the hull as opposed to the usual turret mounting, and which well outstretches a jeep in length. The T-28 never fired a shot in the Second Great War, hostilities ending before this giant was ready for use. *Photo, Planet News*

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